



**Social Science Program
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior**

Visitor Services Project



Joshua Tree National Park Visitor Study

**Spring 2004
Report 152**



University of Idaho

Park Studies Unit



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National Park Service
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Joshua Tree National Park

Visitor Study Spring 2004

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Visitor Services Project Report 152

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Yen Le is a Research Assistant for the Visitor Services Project (VSP), Margaret Littlejohn is the National Park Service VSP Coordinator, and Dr. Steven Hollenhorst is the Director of the Park Studies Unit, Department of Conservation Social Sciences, University of Idaho. We thank the staff and volunteers of Joshua Tree National Park for their assistance with this study. The VSP acknowledges the Public Opinion Lab of the Social and Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University, for its technical assistance.

Visitor Services Project
Joshua Tree National Park
Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Joshua Tree National Park (NP) during April 3-9, 2004. A total of 700 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Visitor groups returned 525 questionnaires for a 75% response rate.
- This report profiles Joshua Tree NP visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Forty-five percent of visitor groups were groups of two and 25% were groups of three or four. Fifty-three percent of the visitor groups were family groups. Fifty-nine percent of visitors were age 26-60 years and 19% were age 15 or younger.
- International visitors, comprising 8% of the total visitation, were from Canada (29%), Germany (21%), England (19%), and 15 other countries. United States visitors were from California (76%), Washington (4%), 31 other states, and Washington D.C.
- Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about Joshua Tree NP through previous visit(s) (52%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (43%), and internet-NPS or Joshua Tree NP web site (39%). Eight percent of visitor groups received no information before their visit. Most groups (90%) received the information they needed about the park.
- Eighty-five percent of visitor groups' primary reason for traveling to the Joshua Tree NP area (including Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree, and Twentynine Palms) was to visit Joshua Tree NP. On this visit, the most common activities while visiting Joshua Tree NP were sightseeing (83%), visiting visitor centers (58%), and dayhiking (56%).
- The average visitor group expenditure in and outside the park (including Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree, and Twentynine Palms) was \$254. The average per capita expenditure was \$78. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of group spent more, 50% spent less) was \$115.
- In regard to use, importance, and quality of park services and facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The most used information services/facilities by the 454 respondents included park brochure/map (93%) and park newspaper (63%). The information services/facilities that received the highest "extremely important" and "very important" ratings included park brochure/map (86%, N=408) and self-guided trail brochures (83%, N=135). Assistance from visitor center staff (92%, N=164) is the service that received the highest "good" and "very good" quality rating.
- The most used visitor services/facilities by the 476 respondents included directional road signs-in park (86%), restrooms (85%), and paved roads (81%). The visitor services/facilities that received the highest "extremely important" and "very important" ratings included campgrounds (96%, N=189), trails (92%, N=296), and restrooms (91%, N=391). The service that received the highest "good" and "very good" quality rating was trails (87%, N=286).
- Most visitor groups (93%) rated the overall quality of visitor services at Joshua Tree NP as "very good" or "good." Less than two percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services as "poor" or "very poor."

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the University of Idaho
Park Studies Unit—visit the VSP website: <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>

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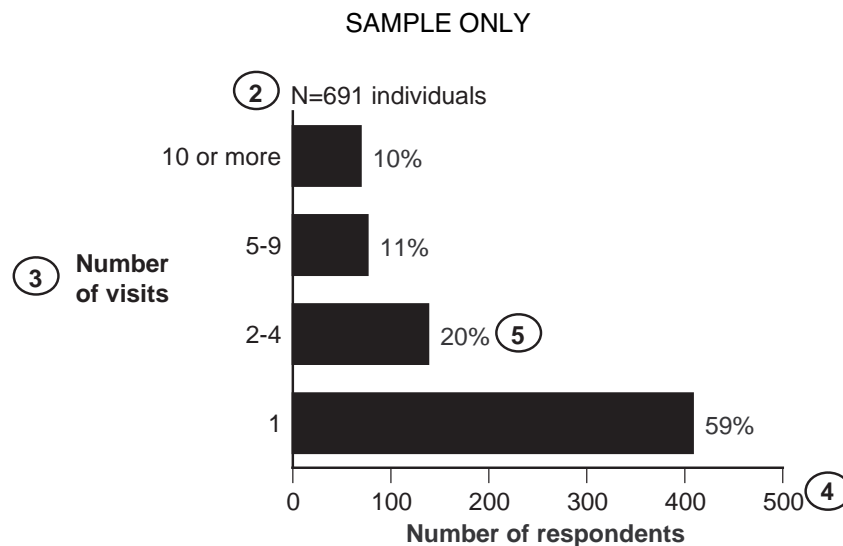
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INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a study of visitors at Joshua Tree NP. This visitor study was conducted from April 3-9, 2004 by the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Services Project (VSP), a part of the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho.

The report is organized into four sections. The **Methods** section discusses the procedures and limitations of the study. The **Results** section provides summary information for each question in the questionnaire and includes a summary of visitor comments. An **Additional Analysis** section is included to help managers request additional analyses. The final section includes a copy of the **Questionnaire**. The separate appendix includes comment summaries and visitors' unedited comments.

Most of this report's graphs resemble the example below. The large numbers refer to explanations following the graph.



① **Figure 4: Number of visits**

- 1: The figure title describes the graph's information.
- 2: Listed above the graph, the "N" shows the number of visitors responding and a description of the chart's information. Interpret data with an "N" of less than 30 with **CAUTION!** as the results may be unreliable.
- 3: Vertical information describes categories.
- 4: Horizontal information shows the number or proportions in each category.
- 5: In most graphs, percentages provide additional information.

METHODS

Questionnaire design and administration

All VSP questionnaires follow design principles outlined in Don A. Dillman's book *Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method* (2000). The Joshua Tree NP questionnaire was developed at a workshop held with park staff to design and prioritize the questions. Some of the questions were comparable with VSP studies conducted at other parks; others were customized for Joshua Tree NP.

Interviews were conducted, and 700 questionnaires were distributed to a sample of visitor groups who arrived at Joshua Tree NP during the period from April 3-9, 2004. Table 1 presents the questionnaire distribution locations. These locations were selected by park staff and the proportion of questionnaires distributed was based on park visitation statistics.

Table 1: Questionnaire distribution locations

N=700 visitor groups

Sampling site	N	%
West Entrance Station	245	35
North Entrance Station	147	21
Cottonwood Visitor Center	105	15
Black Rock Canyon	84	12
Indian Cove	70	10
Oasis Visitor Center	49	7
Totals	700	100

Visitor groups were greeted, briefly introduced to the purpose of the study, and asked to participate. If visitors agreed, an interview lasting approximately two minutes was used to determine group size, group type, and the age of the adult who would complete the questionnaire. These individuals were then asked for their names, addresses, and telephone numbers in order to mail them a reminder/thank you postcard. Visitor groups were given a questionnaire and asked to complete it after their visit and then return it by mail. The questionnaires were pre-addressed and postage paid.

Two weeks following the survey, a reminder/thank you postcard was mailed to all participants. Replacement questionnaires were mailed to participants who had not returned their questionnaires four weeks after the survey. Seven weeks after the survey, a second round of replacement questionnaires were mailed to visitors who still had not returned their questionnaires.

Data analysis

Returned questionnaires were coded and the information was entered into a computer using a standard statistical software package—Statistical Analysis System (SAS). Frequency distribution and cross-tabulations were calculated for the coded data, and responses to open-ended questions were categorized and summarized.

Sampling size, missing data, and reporting items

This study collected information on both visitor groups and individual group members. Thus, the sample size ("N") varies from figure to figure. For example, while Figure 1 shows information for 516 visitor groups, Figure 3 presents data for 1,625 individuals. A note above each graph or table specifies the information illustrated.

Occasionally, a respondent may not have answered all of the questions, or may have answered some incorrectly. Unanswered questions result in missing data and cause the number in the sample to vary from figure to figure. For example, although Joshua Tree NP visitors returned 525 questionnaires, Figure 1 shows data for only 516 respondents.

Questions answered incorrectly due to carelessness, misunderstanding directions, and so forth turn up in the data as reporting errors. These create small data inconsistencies.

Limitations

Like all surveys, this study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results.

1. It is not possible to know whether visitor responses reflect actual behavior. This disadvantage applies to all such studies and is reduced by having visitors fill out the questionnaire soon after they visit the park.
2. The data reflect visitor use patterns of visitors to the selected sites during the study period of April 3-9, 2004. The results do not necessarily apply to visitors during other times of the year.
3. Caution is advised when interpreting any data with a sample size of less than 30, as the results may be unreliable. Whenever the sample size is less than 30, the word "**CAUTION!**" is included in the graph, figure, or table.

Special conditions

Weather conditions during the visitor study were typical April weather for the Joshua Tree NP area which was mostly cool or slightly breezy with sunny to partly cloudy days.

RESULTS

Visitor groups contacted

At Joshua Tree NP, 767 visitor groups were contacted and 700 of these groups (91%) accepted questionnaires. Questionnaires were completed and returned by 525 visitor groups, resulting in a 75% response rate for this study.

Table 2 compares age and group size information collected from the total sample of visitors, who participated, with age and group size of visitors who actually returned questionnaires. Based on the variables of respondent age and visitor group size, non-response bias was judged to be insignificant.

Table 2: Comparison of total sample and actual respondents

Variable	Total sample		Actual respondents	
	N	Average	N	Average
Age of respondents	689	44	513	46
Group size	673	4	516	4

Demographics

Figure 1 shows visitor group sizes, which ranged from one person to 54 people. Forty-five percent of visitor groups consisted of two people, while another 25% had three or four people.

Fifty-three percent of visitor groups were made up of family members and 24% were with friends (see Figure 2). "Other" group types included romantic interest partners, rock climbing groups, hiking clubs, motorcycle club (AMCA), botanical study groups, Boy Scouts, Desert Institute, and home schooling groups.

Forty-seven percent of the visitors were in the 26-50 age group and 19% were 15 years or younger (see Figure 3). Over one-half of visitors (52%) were male and 48% were female (see Figure 4). Forty-nine percent of visitors reported that this was their first time visiting Joshua Tree NP, 16% had visited the park between three and five times, 14% had visited twice, and 16% visited nine or more times in their lifetime (see Figure 5).

Eight percent of visitor groups were international, from Canada (29%), Germany (21%), England (19%), and 15 other countries (see Table 3).

The largest proportions of United States visitors were from California (76%), Washington (4%), New York (2%), and Arizona (2%), as shown in Map 1 and Table 4. Smaller proportions of U.S. visitors came from another 29 states and Washington D.C.

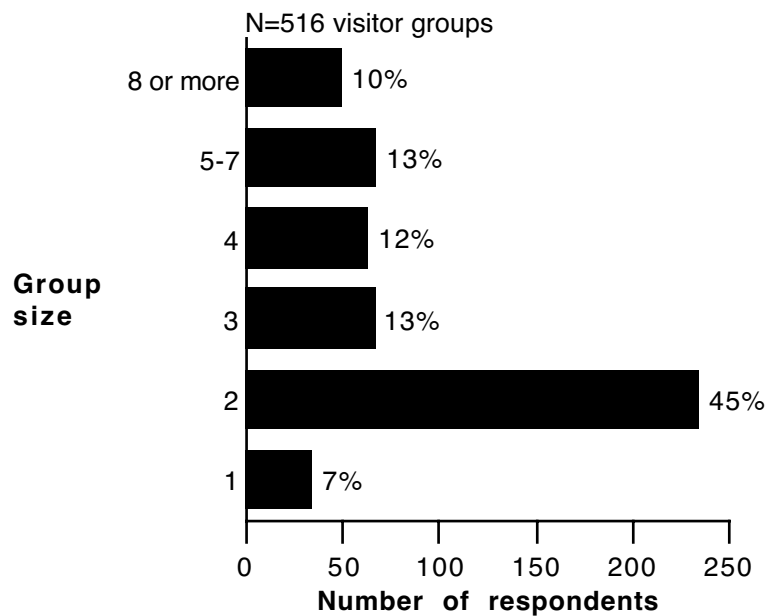


Figure 1: Visitor group sizes

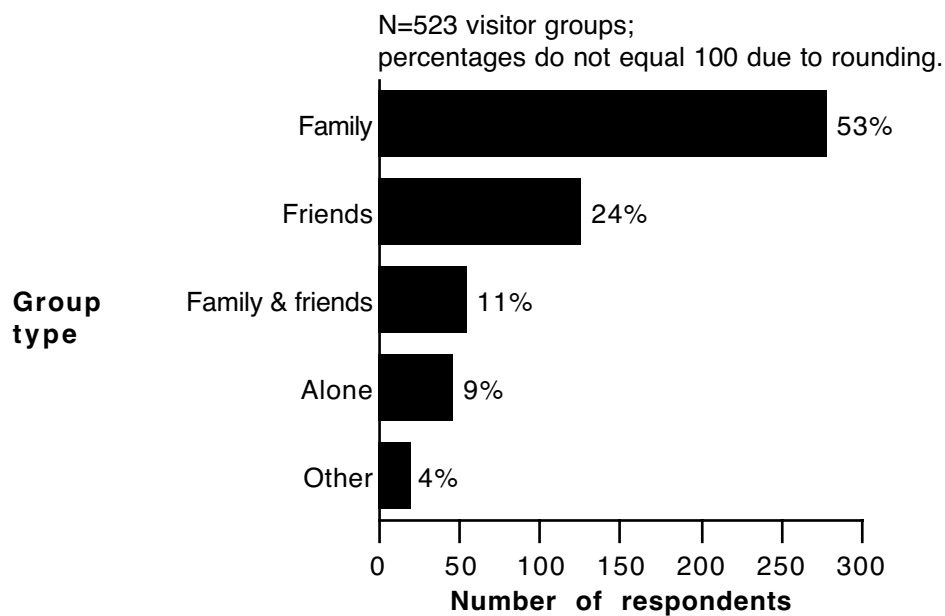
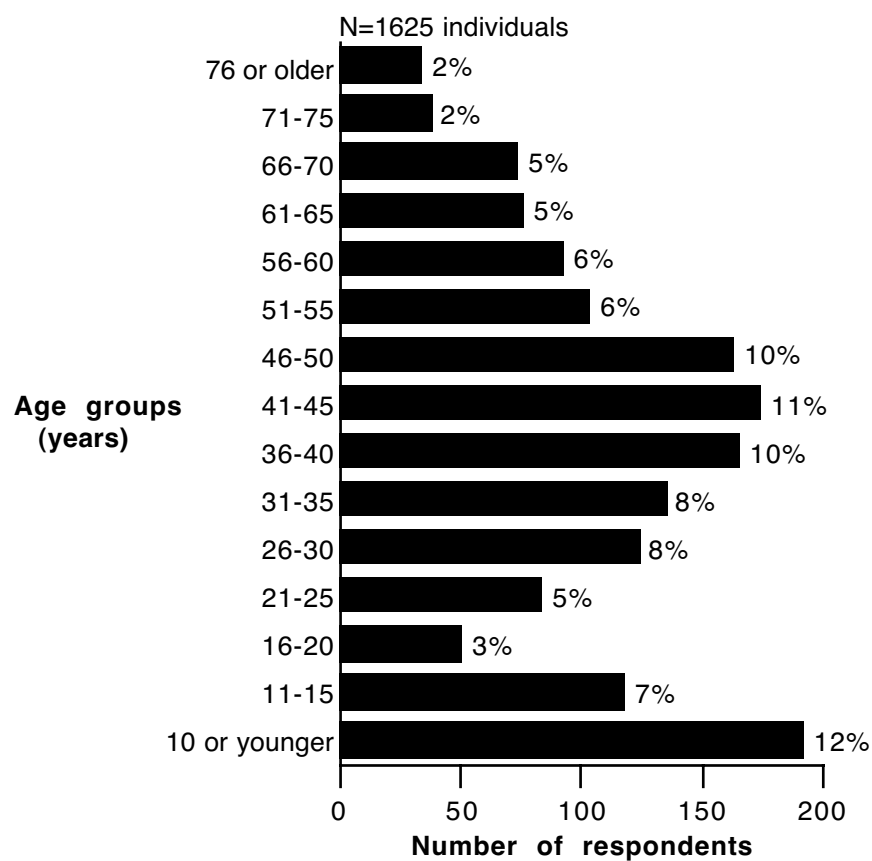
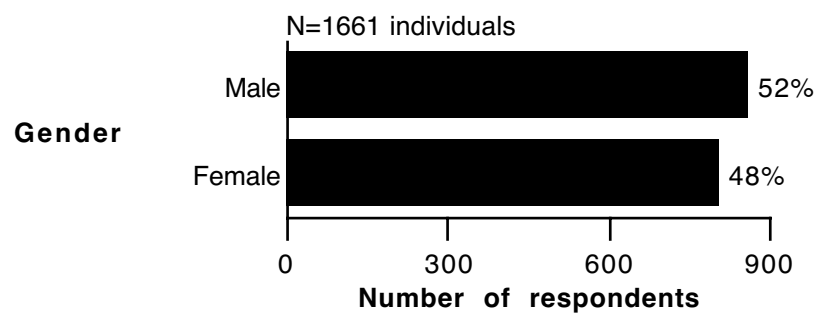


Figure 2: Visitor group types

**Figure 3: Visitor ages****Figure 4: Visitor gender**

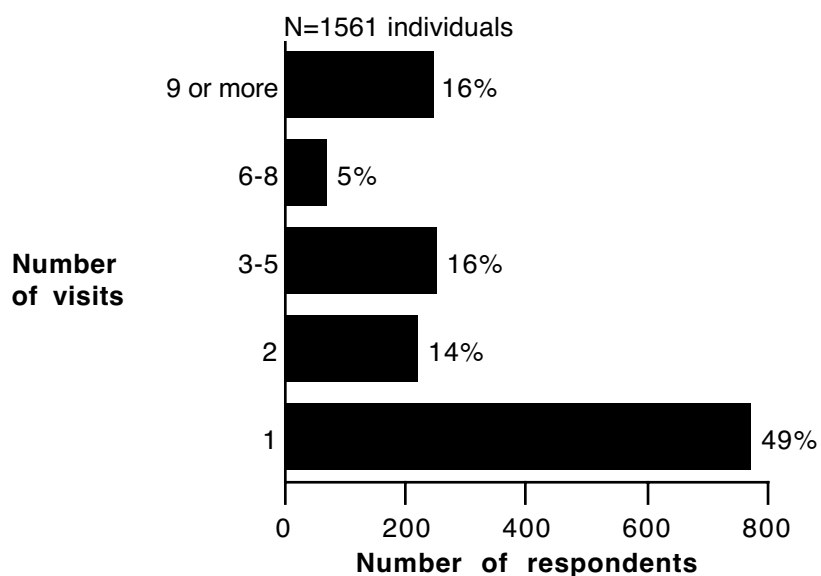
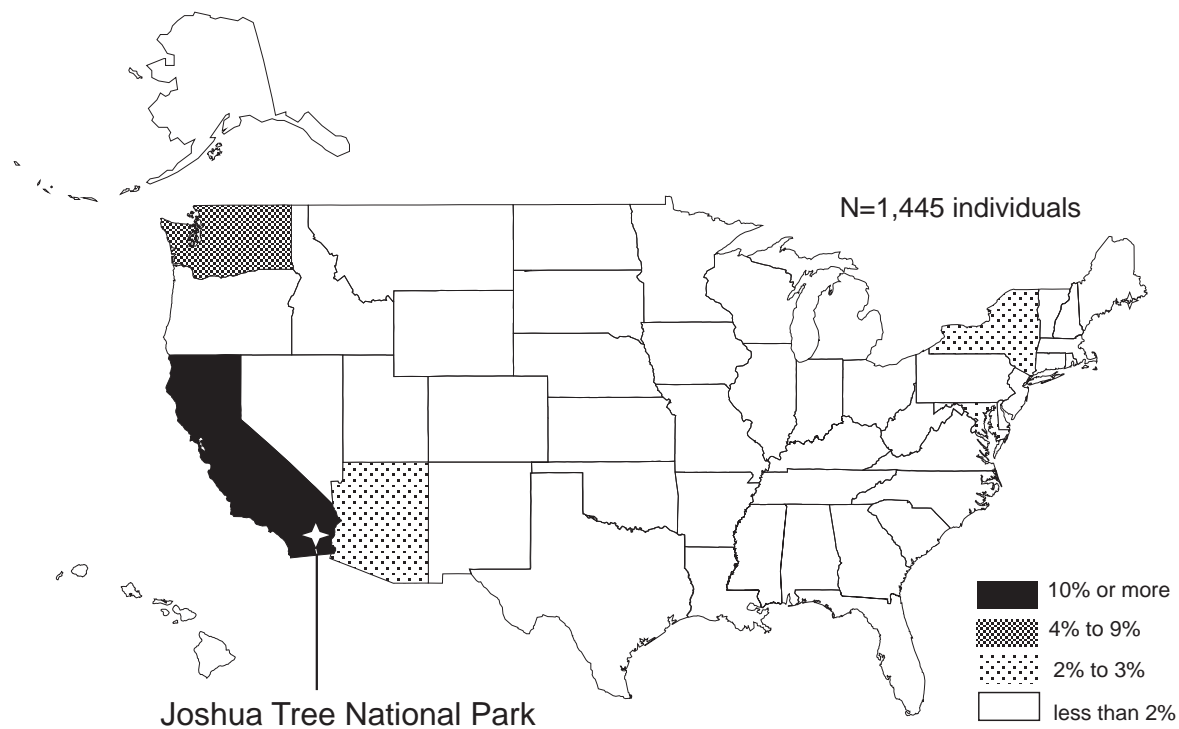


Figure 5: Number of visits to Joshua Tree NP during visitor lifetime (including this visit)

Table 3: International visitors by country of residence

percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Country	Number of individuals	Percent of international visitors N=126 individuals	Percent of total visitors N=1,571 individuals
Canada	36	29	2
Germany	26	21	2
England	24	19	2
Switzerland	11	9	1
Spain	4	3	<1
Austria	3	2	<1
Denmark	3	2	<1
Sweden	3	2	<1
Belgium	2	2	<1
Bermuda	2	2	<1
China	2	2	<1
Czech	2	2	<1
France	2	2	<1
Philippines	2	2	<1
Australia	1	1	<1
Chile	1	1	<1
Ireland	1	1	<1
Russia	1	1	<1



Map 1: Proportion of United States visitors by state of residence

Table 4: United States visitors by state of residence

percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

State	Number of individuals	Percent of U.S. visitors N=1,445 individuals	Percent of total visitors N=1,571 individuals
California	1100	76	70
Washington	61	4	4
New York	35	2	2
Arizona	22	2	1
Florida	19	1	1
Michigan	17	1	1
Minnesota	17	1	1
New Jersey	16	1	1
Oregon	14	1	1
Pennsylvania	12	1	1
Texas	12	1	1
Colorado	9	1	1
Illinois	9	1	1
Wisconsin	9	1	1
Nevada	8	1	1
18 other states and Washington, D.C	85	6	5

Visitor awareness of Congressionally designated wilderness areas

Visitor groups were asked, “Prior to your visit, did you know that Joshua Tree NP has Congressionally designated wilderness areas?” Almost one-half of visitor groups (47%) knew about designated wilderness areas (see Figure 6). However, 46% did not know and 7% were “not sure.” When asked if they had visited the wilderness areas, 45% of visitor groups reported that they did not visit, while 24% visited and 31% were “not sure” (see Figure 7).

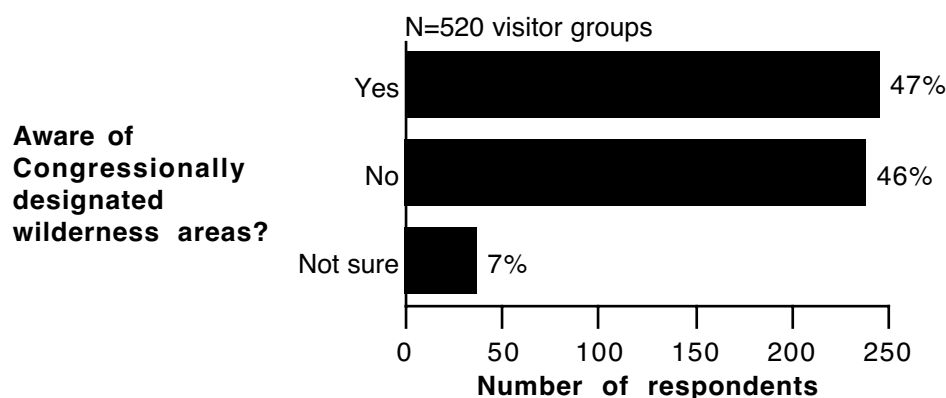


Figure 6: Visitor awareness of Congressionally designated wilderness areas in Joshua Tree NP

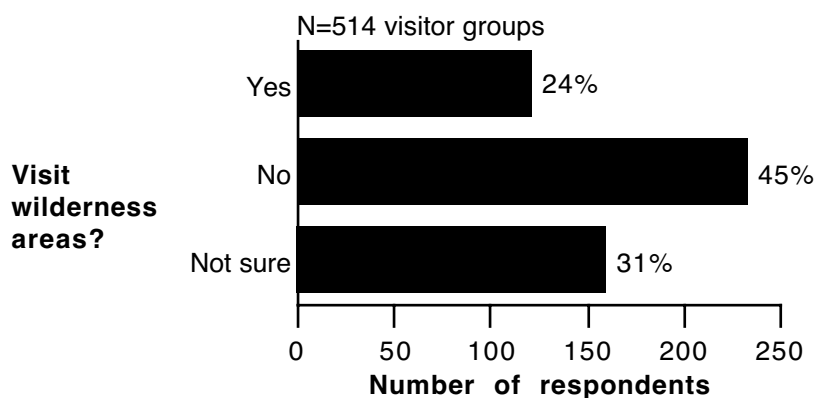


Figure 7: Visit designated wilderness areas?

Sources of information

Most visitor groups (92%) obtained information about Joshua Tree NP prior to their visit to the park, while 8% did not receive any information (see Figure 8). As shown in Figure 9, the most common sources of information used by visitor groups included previous visits (52%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (43%), the Internet-NPS or Joshua Tree NP web site (39%), and travel guides/tour books (30%). Table 5 lists “other” sources of information that visitor groups used.

Visitor groups who obtained information about Joshua Tree NP prior to this visit were then asked whether they received needed information. Most visitor groups (90%) reported that they received the type of information about the park they needed (see Figure 10). However, 5% of visitor groups reported that they did not receive information they needed and 5% were “not sure.”

The type of information that visitor groups needed but were unable to obtain included details about campsites (location of each campground, new camping fees, reservations, handicapped accessibility, and group campsites), specific point of entry for park access, detailed maps of hiking trails, information about accommodations in the area, policies concerning pets on trails, and more information on flora, fauna, and historical features.

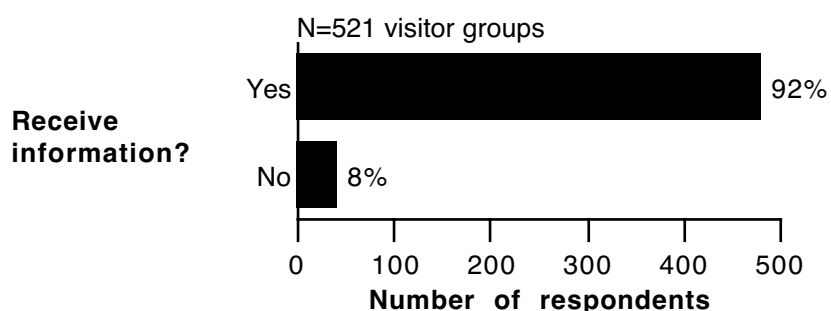


Figure 8: Visitors who received information about Joshua Tree NP prior to this visit

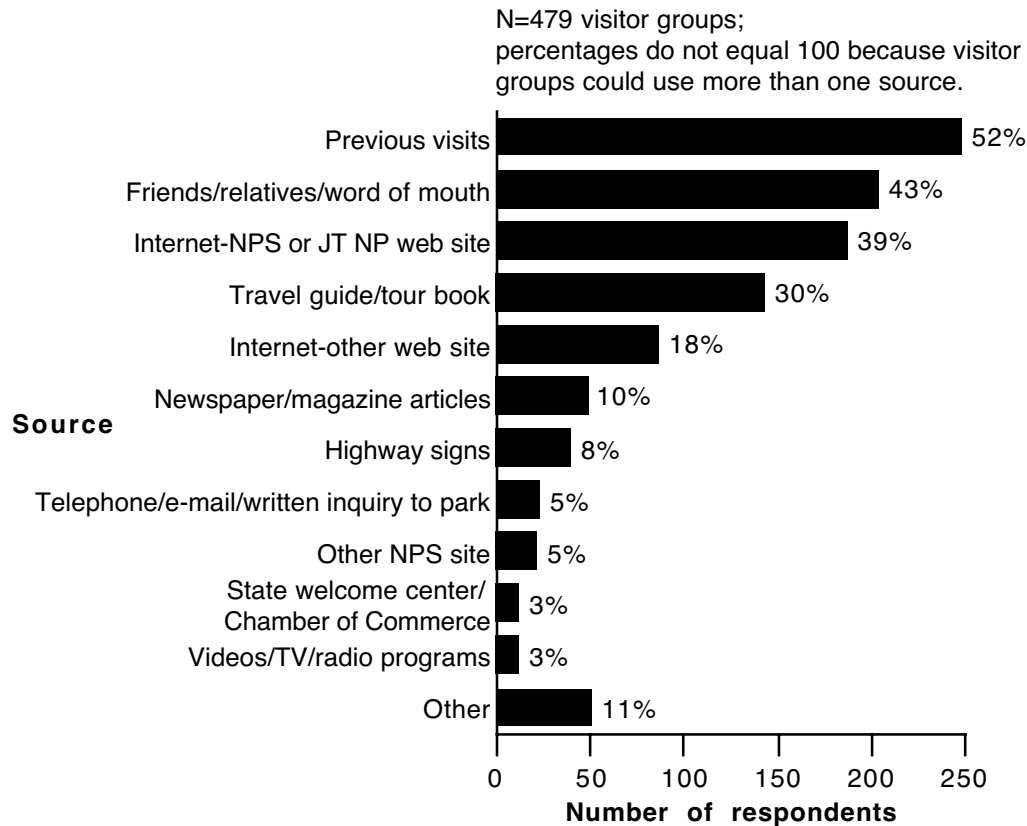


Figure 9: Sources of information used by visitor groups prior to this visit

Table 5: “Other” sources of information used by visitors

N=50 comments

Source	Number of time mentioned
Climbing guide books/magazine	5
Heard a song about it	5
Road maps	5
Live in the area	5
Brochure at hotels, motels, etc.	4
Once visited as a child	3
Hiking clubs/stores	3
NPS employees	3
NPS maps and guides	2
College classes	3
Previous visit to California	2
Scout outing	2
Books on desert	2
Friends/relatives	2
Stargazing map	1
Online wildflower information	1
Birding guides	1
AAA tour books	1

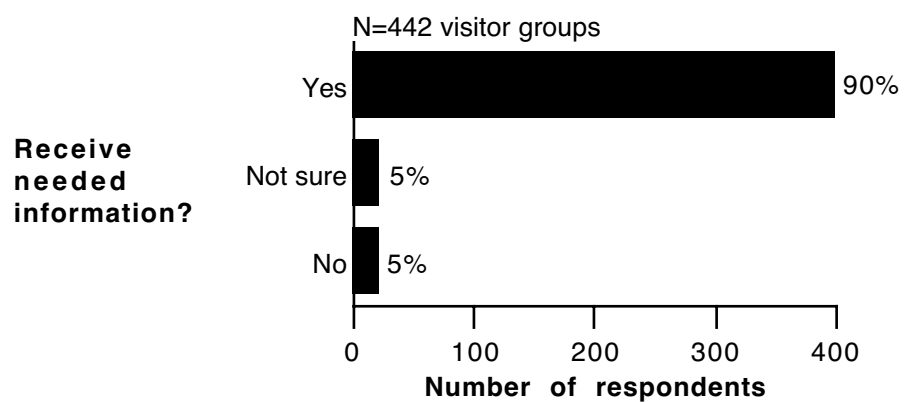


Figure 10: Visitor groups who received needed information prior to this visit to Joshua Tree NP

Visitor awareness of issues facing Joshua Tree NP

Joshua Tree NP is facing a number of issues concerning natural and cultural resources. Visitor groups were asked if they were aware of such issues prior to this visit to the park. As shown in Figure 11, most visitor groups (73%) reported being aware of off-road vehicles damaging desert, 59% were aware of theft of natural resources, and 57% were aware of air pollution impacts. Less than one-half of visitor groups were aware of the other six issues.

When asked if they learned about these issues on this visit, 48% of visitor groups reported learning about problems with begging coyotes, 42% learned about threats to desert tortoise populations, and 39% learned about air pollution impacts (see Figure 12).

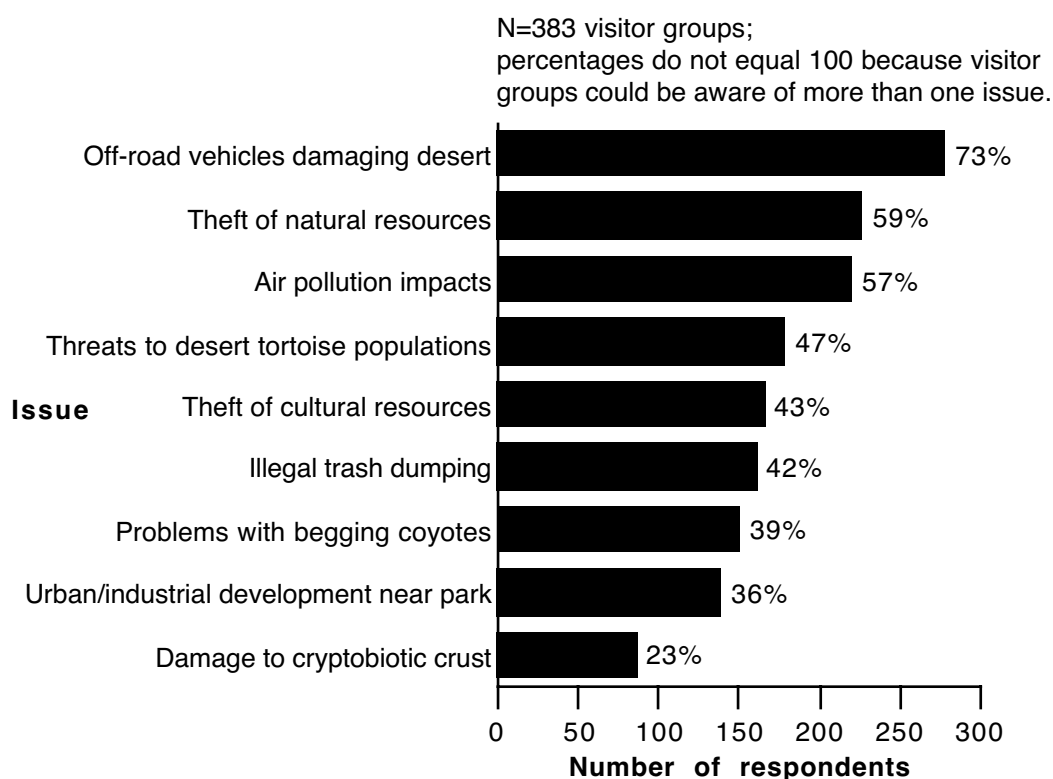


Figure 11: Visitor awareness of issues facing Joshua Tree NP

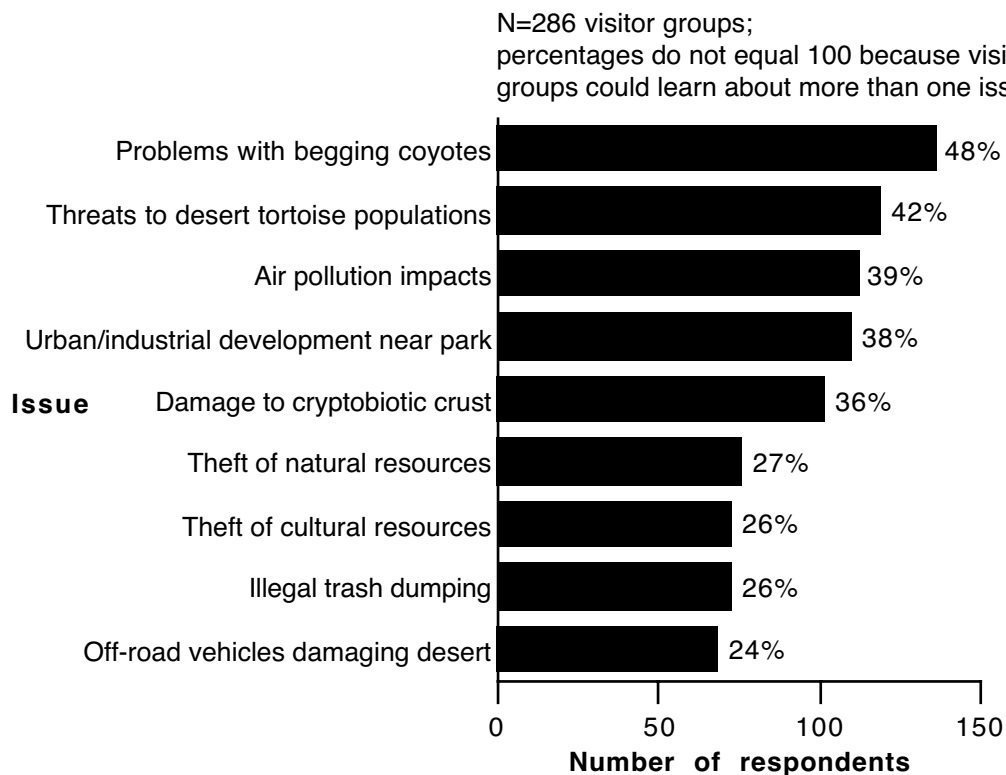
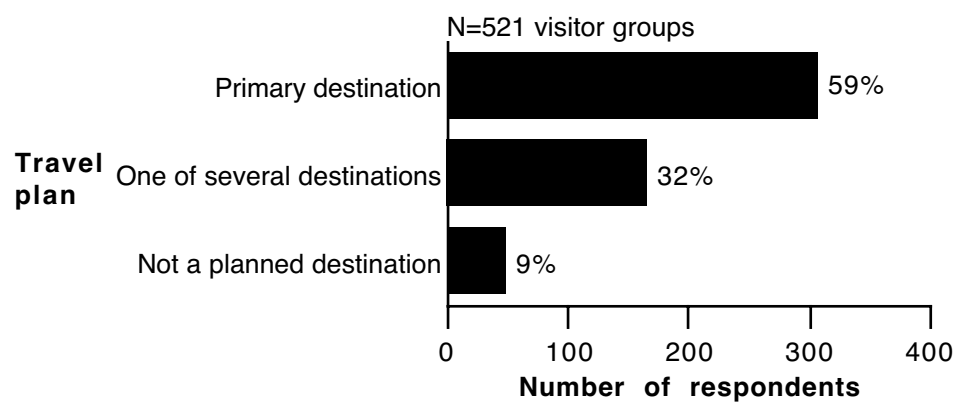


Figure 12: Issues that visitor groups learned on this visit

Visitor travel plans

Visitor groups were asked to indicate how Joshua Tree NP fit into their travel plans. As shown in Figure 13, Joshua Tree NP was their primary destination for most groups (59%). Thirty-two percent of visitor groups reported that the park was one of several destinations and 9% reported that Joshua Tree NP was not a planned destination on this visit.

**Figure 13: Visitor travel plans**

Primary reason for visiting the area

The primary reason for visiting the Joshua Tree NP area, including Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree, and Twentynine Palms, was to visit the park for 85% of visitor groups, as shown in Figure 14. Seven percent of visitor groups came to visit friends/relatives, 4% for business or other reasons and another 4% came to visit other attractions in the area.

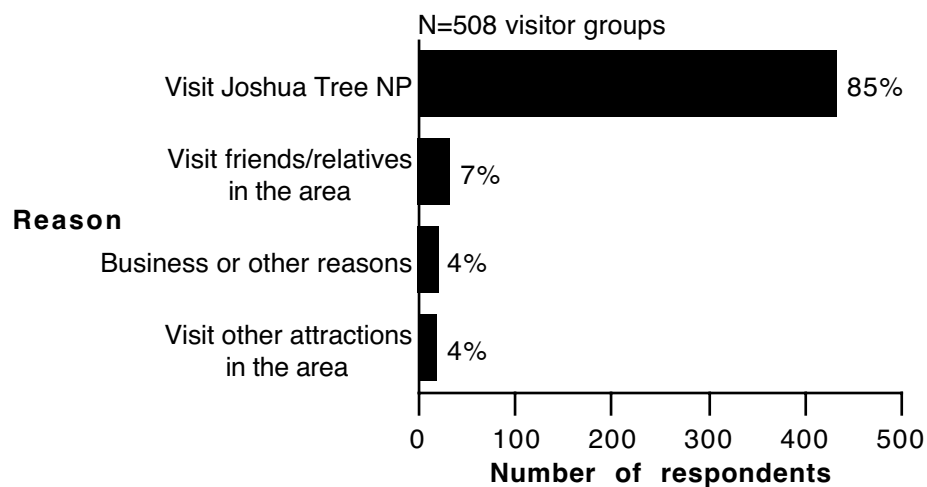


Figure 14: Primary reason for visiting Joshua Tree NP area

Length of visit/number of park entries/number of vehicles

On this visit, most visitor groups (54%) visited Joshua Tree NP on more than one day (24 hours) on this visit, while 46% spent less than one day (see Figure 15). Visitor groups were then asked to report the number of hours they spent at the park **on the day they received the questionnaire**. Note: because visitor groups were asked to report the number of hours on the day they received the questionnaire, some visitor groups included hours of their overnight stay. Therefore, the number of hours spent ranged from less than one hour to 24 hours. Thirty-two percent of visitor groups spent between three and four hours, 23% spent five to six hours, and 18% spent eleven hours or more (see Figure 16).

Visitor groups who spent more than one day were then asked the number of days they visited Joshua Tree NP on this visit. Less than one-half of visitor groups (44%) spent two days, 28% spent three days, and 24% spent four or more days.

One-half of visitor groups (50%) entered the park once, 26% entered twice, and 11% entered the park three times during this visit to Joshua Tree NP (see Figure 18).

On this visit, most groups (81%) arrived at Joshua Tree NP in one vehicle, 10% of visitor groups used two vehicles, and 9% arrived in three or more vehicles (see Figure 19).

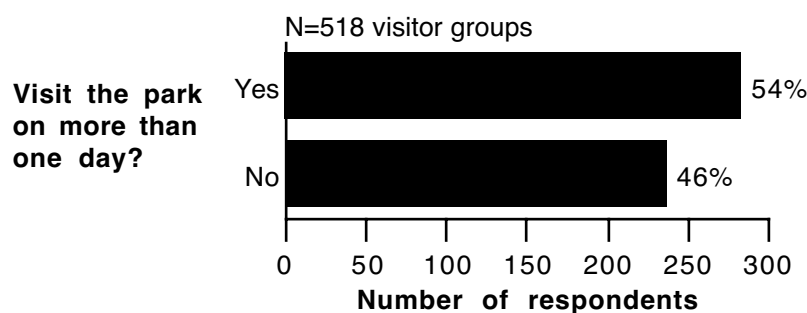


Figure 15: Visitor groups who visited Joshua Tree NP on more than one day

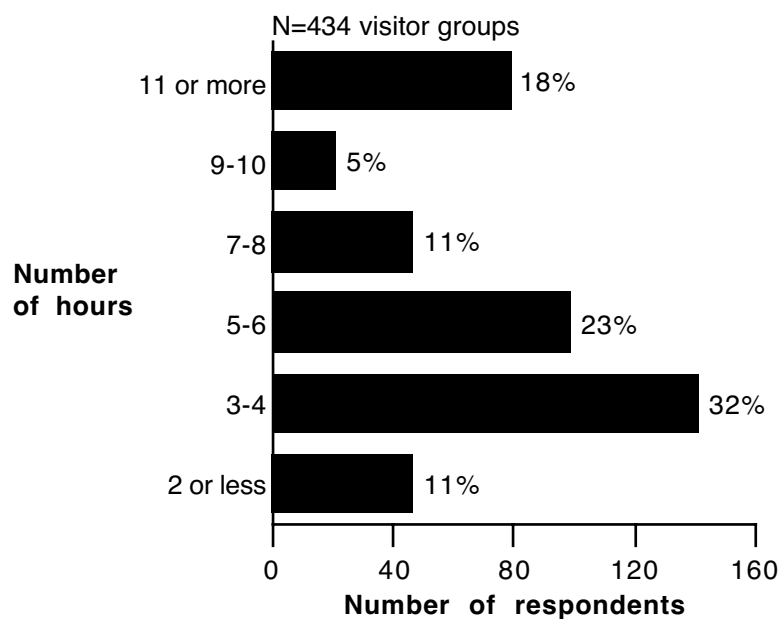


Figure 16: Number of hours spent at Joshua Tree NP on the day the questionnaire was received

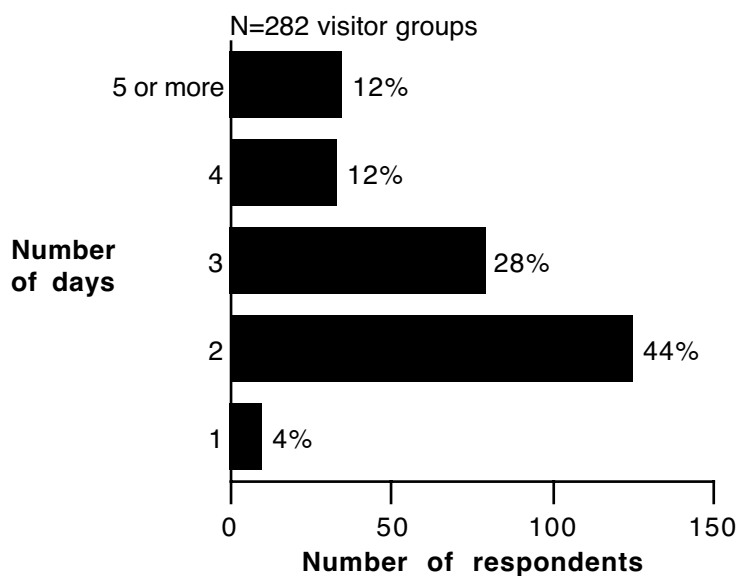


Figure 17: Number of days spent visiting Joshua Tree NP

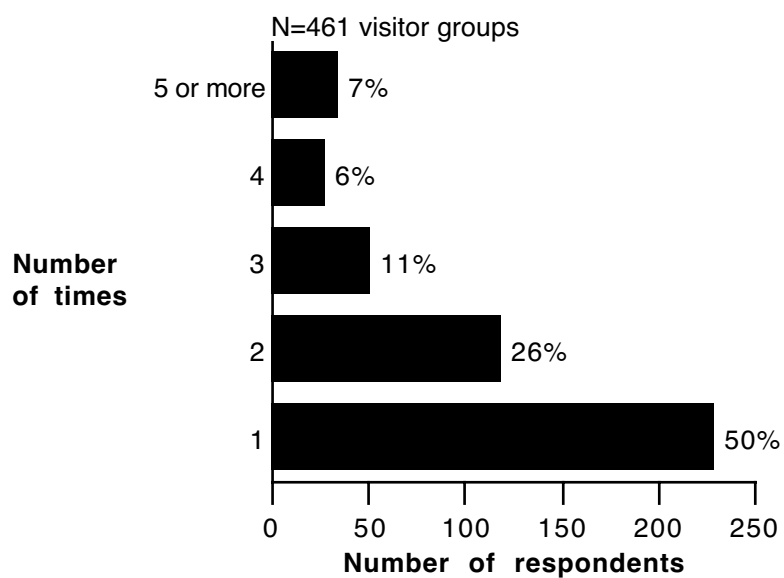


Figure 18: Number of times entered Joshua Tree NP on this visit

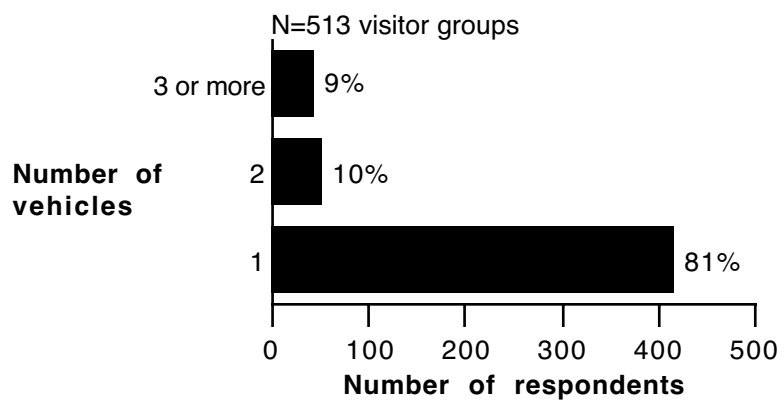


Figure 19: Number of vehicles per group

Activities

The most common activities that visitor groups participated in during this visit to the Joshua Tree NP included sightseeing (83%), visiting visitor center(s) (58%), day hiking (56%), and walking self-guided nature trails (55%), as shown in Figure 20. The least common activity was backpacking overnight (2%). “Other” activities are listed in Table 6.

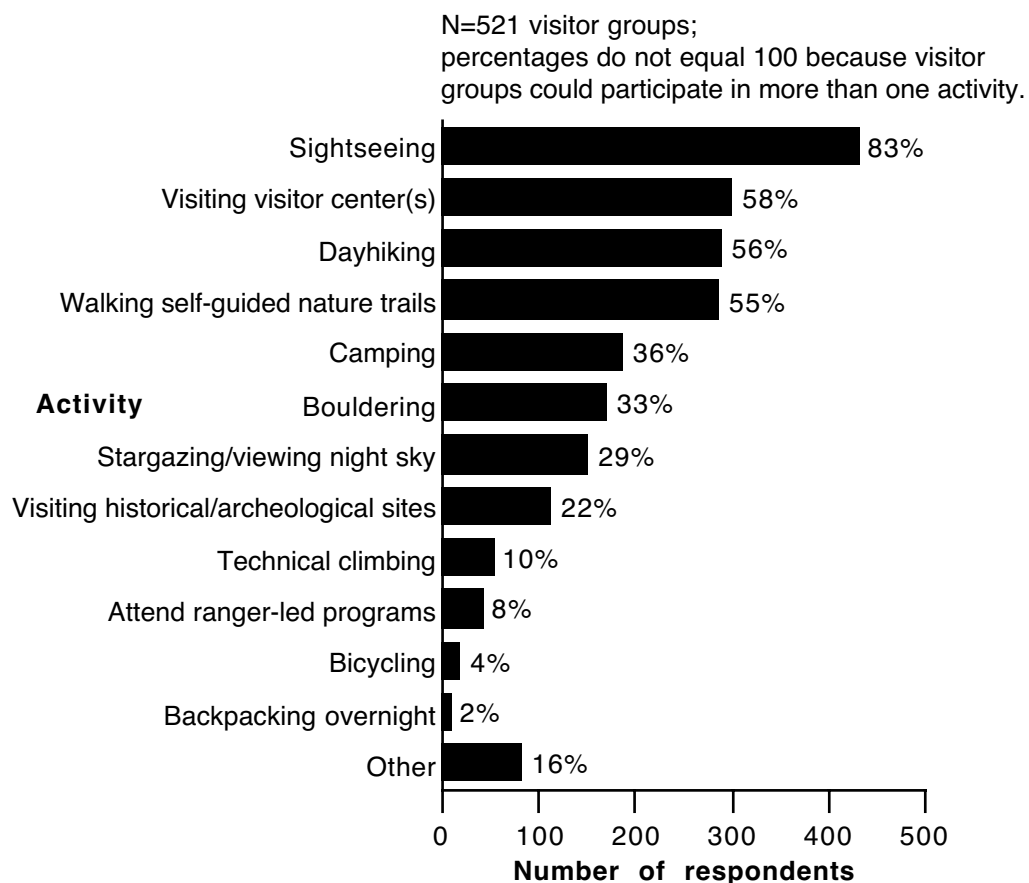


Figure 20: Visitor activities

Table 6: “Other” activities visitor groups participated in during this visit

N=83 visitor groups;
some visitor groups made more than one comment.

Activity	Number of times mentioned
Photography	30
Wildflower viewing	10
Bird watching	9
Picnicking	7
Riding motorbike	3
Spending time with family/friends	3
Enjoying the beauty of this place	3
Driving through	3
Backcountry hiking	2
Wildlife watching	2
Cooking	2
Climbing/bouldering	2
Backcountry camping	1
Horseback riding	1
Picking up trash	1
Singing	1
Trail running	1

Overnight accommodations/campsite reservations

Visitor groups were asked a series of questions concerning their overnight accommodations in Joshua Tree NP and the surrounding area (including Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree, and Twentynine Palms). First, visitor groups were asked if they stayed overnight away from home in the area. Among the respondents, 54% reported they stayed overnight away from home in the park area, while 46% said that they did not stay overnight (see Figure 21).

Visitor groups who stayed overnight away from home were then asked to report the number of nights they stayed inside Joshua Tree NP and number of nights they stayed in the surrounding area. Thirty-four percent of visitor groups stayed two nights, 28% stayed one night, and 38% stayed three or more nights inside the park, as shown in Figure 22. Of those who stayed overnight in the area, 41% stayed one night, 27% stayed two nights, and 31% stayed three or more nights (see Figure 23).

The most common type of lodging that visitor groups used to stay overnight inside Joshua Tree NP was tent camping in a developed campground (80%), followed by RV/trailer camping (13%), as shown in Figure 24. Outside the park, a lodge/motel/hotel/cabin (69%) and RV/trailer camping (12%) were the most common types of lodging (see Figure 25). "Other" types of lodging included private condo, in a van, and Oasis Lodge.

Most visitor groups (76%) did not attempt to make reservations for campsites in Joshua Tree NP for this trip (see Figure 26). Of those who tried to make reservations, 82% were able to reserve their campsites, while 18% were not able to make reservations for this trip (see Figure 27).

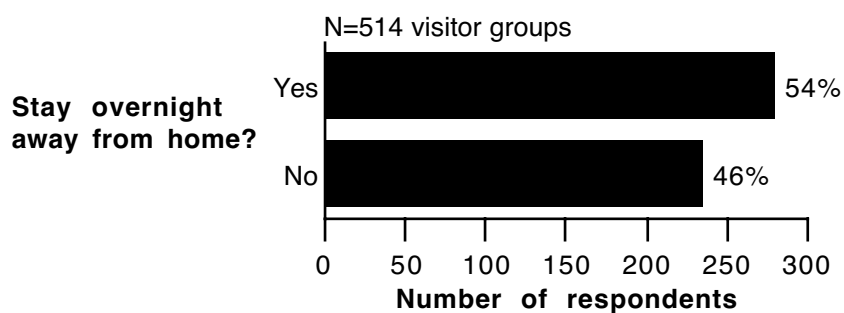


Figure 21: Visitor groups who stayed overnight away from home in the Joshua Tree NP area

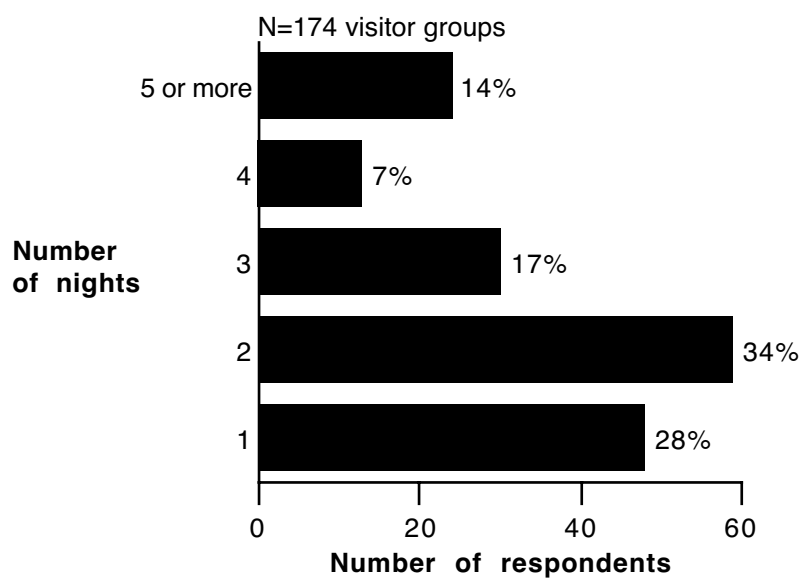


Figure 22: Number of nights visitor groups stayed inside the park

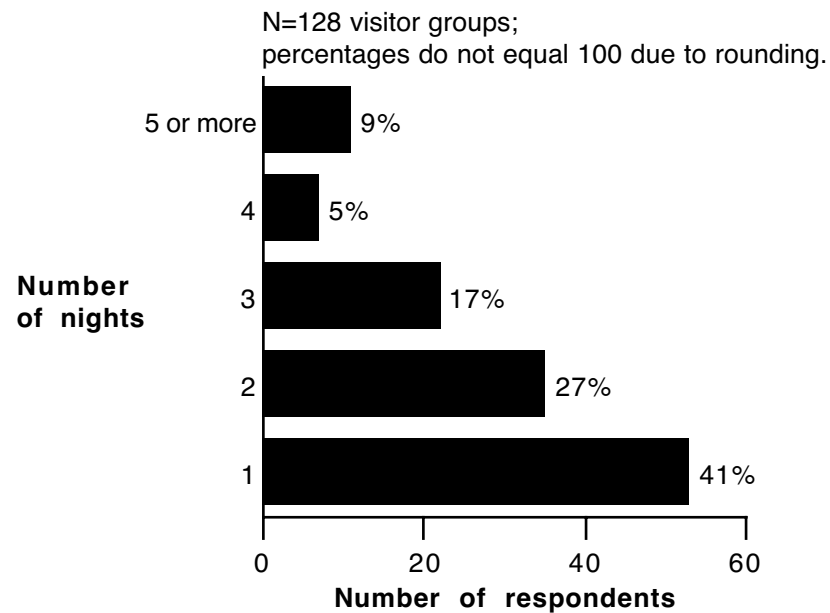


Figure 23: Number of nights visitor groups stayed outside the park but in the area

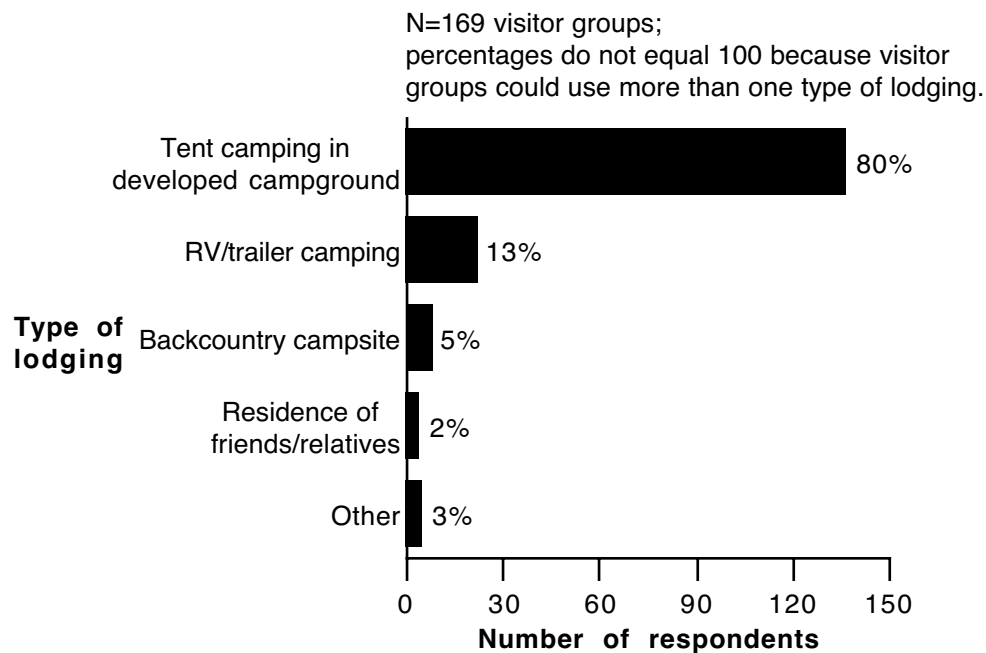


Figure 24: Type of lodging visitor groups used inside the park

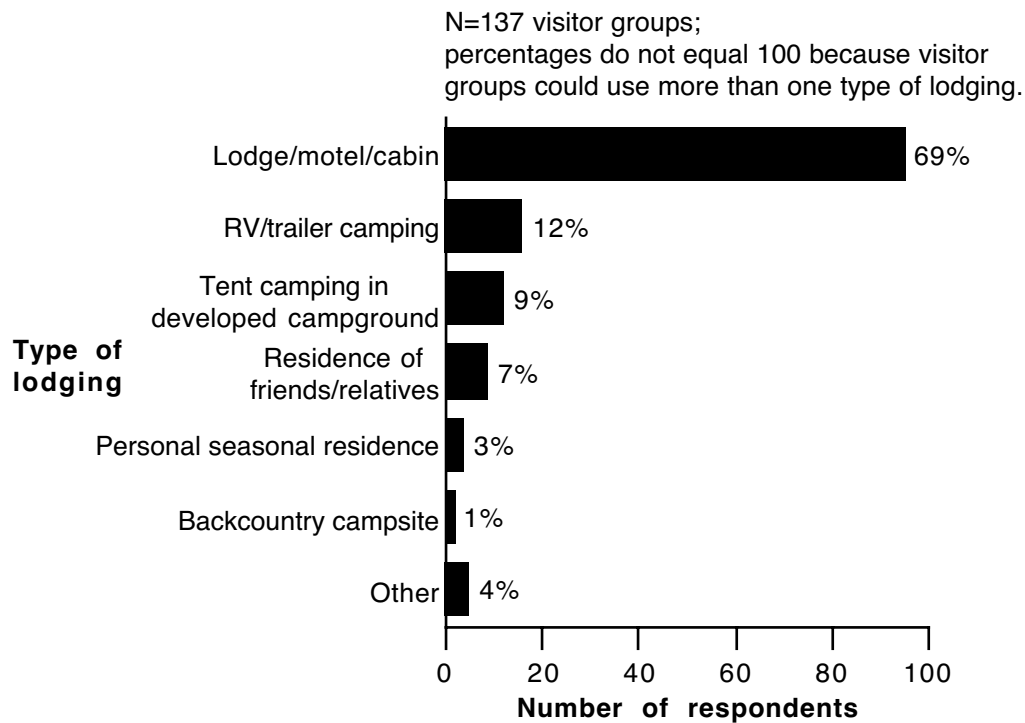


Figure 25: Type of lodging visitor groups used outside the park

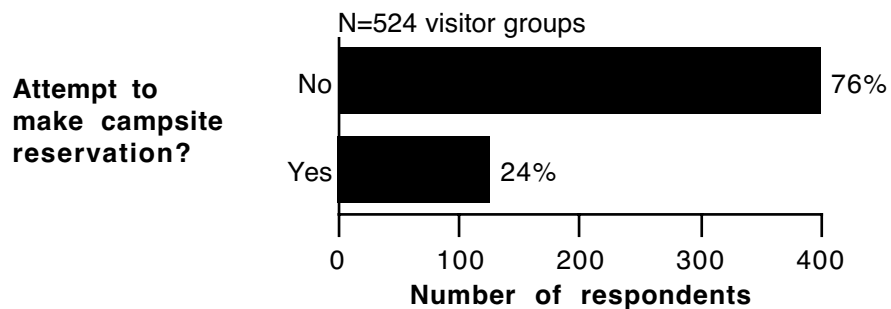


Figure 26: Visitor groups who attempted to make reservations for campsites in Joshua Tree NP

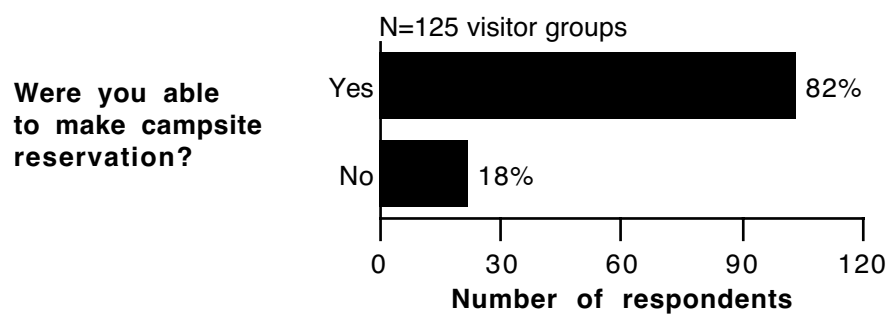
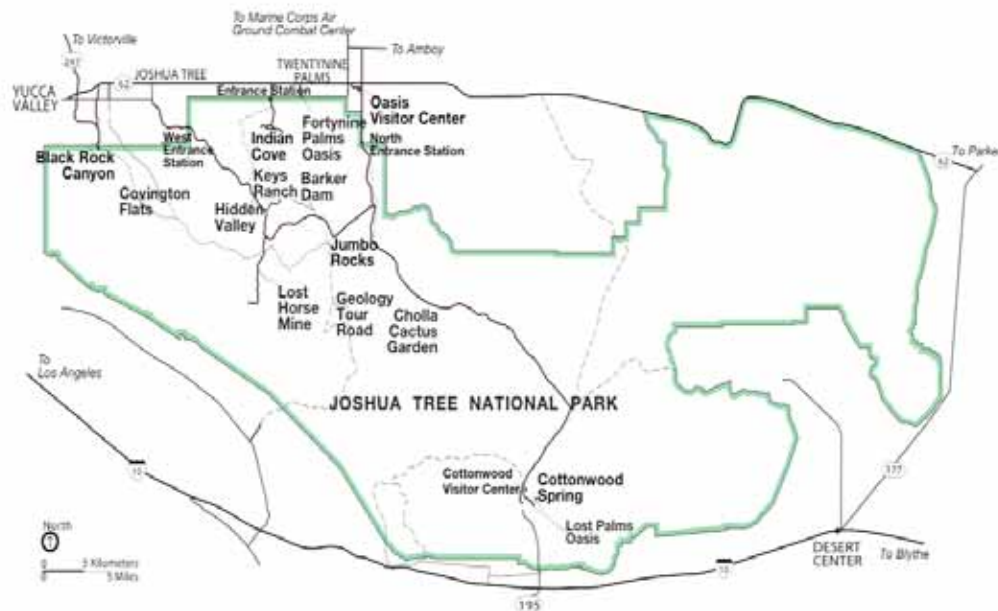


Figure 27: Visitor groups who were able to make campsite reservations

Sites visited

Visitor groups were asked to list the order in which they visited sites in Joshua Tree NP on this visit, using Map 2. The most visited sites included Jumbo Rocks Area (56%), Hidden Valley (48%), and Oasis Visitor Center (40%), as shown in Figure 28. The least visited site was Geology Tour Road (8%). “Other” sites mentioned are listed in Table 7.

Visitor groups listed the sites where they stopped first on this visit with 22% of groups citing the Oasis Visitor Center (see Figure 29). Other sites that visitor groups visited first were Hidden Valley (15%), Black Rock Canyon (12%), and Indian Cove (12%).



Map 2: Joshua Tree NP map

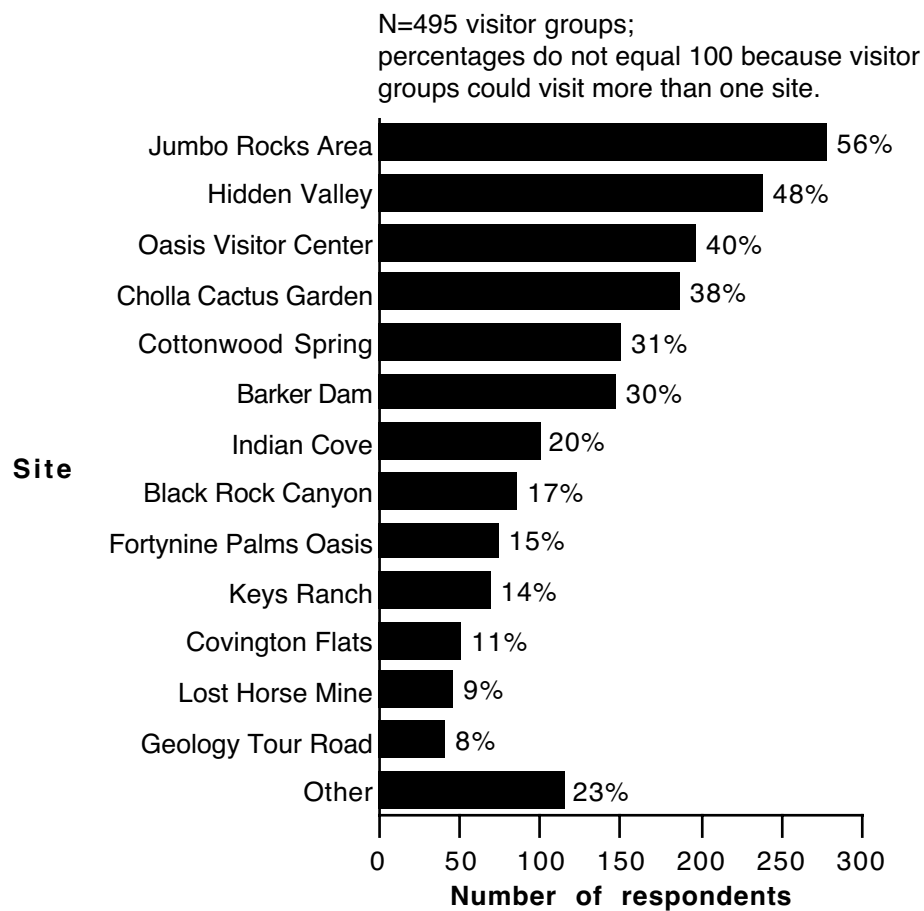


Figure 28: Sites visited in Joshua Tree NP

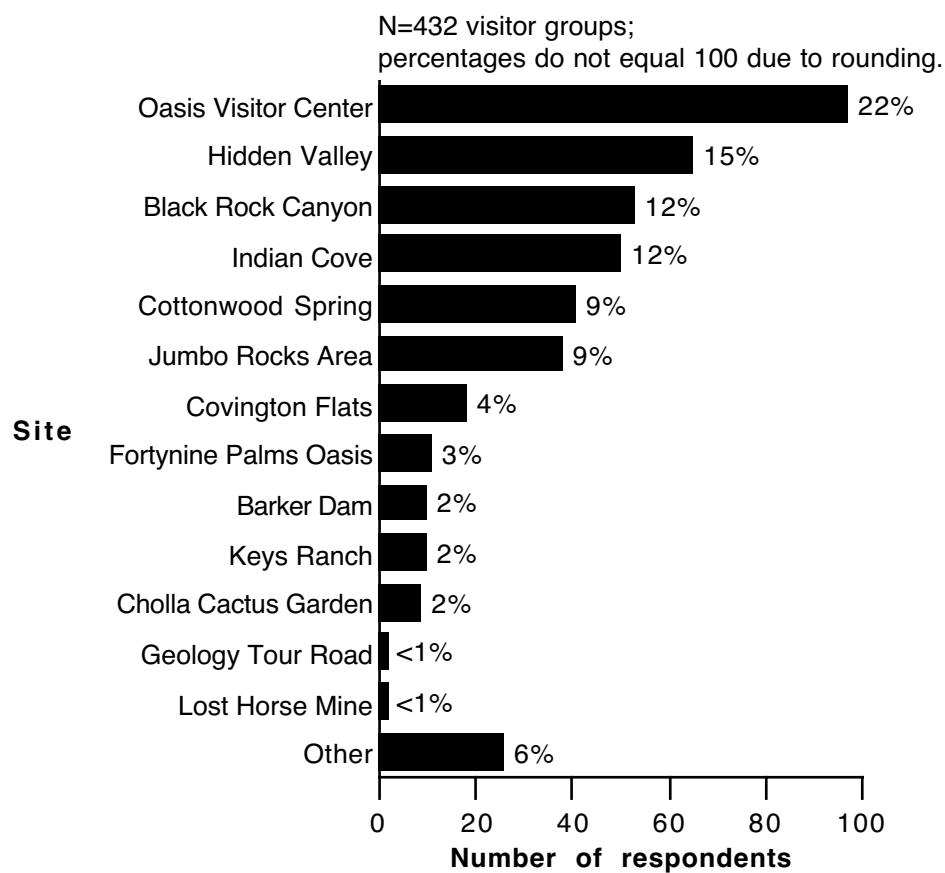


Figure 29: Sites visited first on this visit

Table 7: “Other” sites visitor groups visited on this trip to Joshua Tree NP

N=107 sites;
some visitors listed more than one site.

Site	Number of times mentioned
Keys View	20
Ryan Mountain	12
Split Rock	9
Boy Scout trail	5
Ocotillo Patch	5
Driving through	5
Cap Rock	5
Rattle Snake Canyon	4
Arch Rock	4
Wonderland of Rock	4
White Tank	4
Desert Queen Mine	4
Cottonwood Visitor Center	3
Lost Palm Oasis	3
Live Oak	3
Belle Rock	2
Quail Springs	2
Ocotillo Garden	2
Stopping wherever wildflowers were abundant	2
Mastodon Peak	2
Old Dale Road	2
Pine City	2
Cohn Ranch	1
Ellesmere Island	1
Bajada Nature Trail	1

Park entrance used

On this visit, 38% of visitor groups first entered the park through the West Entrance Station (see Figure 30). Other groups first entered at the North Entrance Station (28%), Indian Cove (12%), and Cottonwood Spring (12%). “Other” park entrances included Keys View, Wall Street Mine, Twentynine Palms, Oasis Visitor Center, Cottonwood Visitor Center, and Lost Palm.

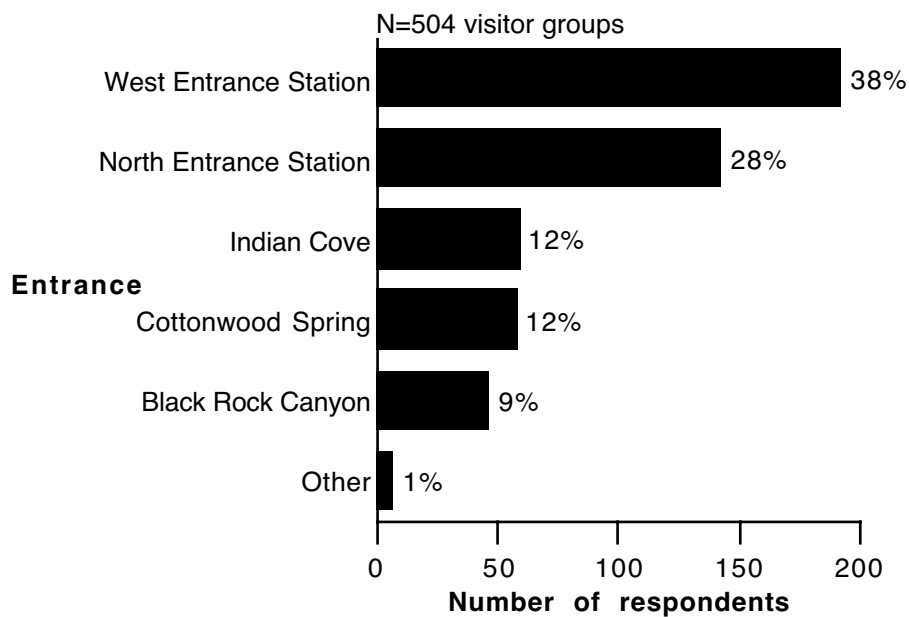


Figure 30: Park entrance used on this visit

Information services and facilities: use, importance, and quality

Visitors were asked to note the information services and facilities they used during this visit to Joshua Tree NP. The most used services and facilities included the park brochure/map (93%), park newspaper (63%), and visitor center exhibits (49%), as shown in Figure 31. The least used service was the orientation video (1%).

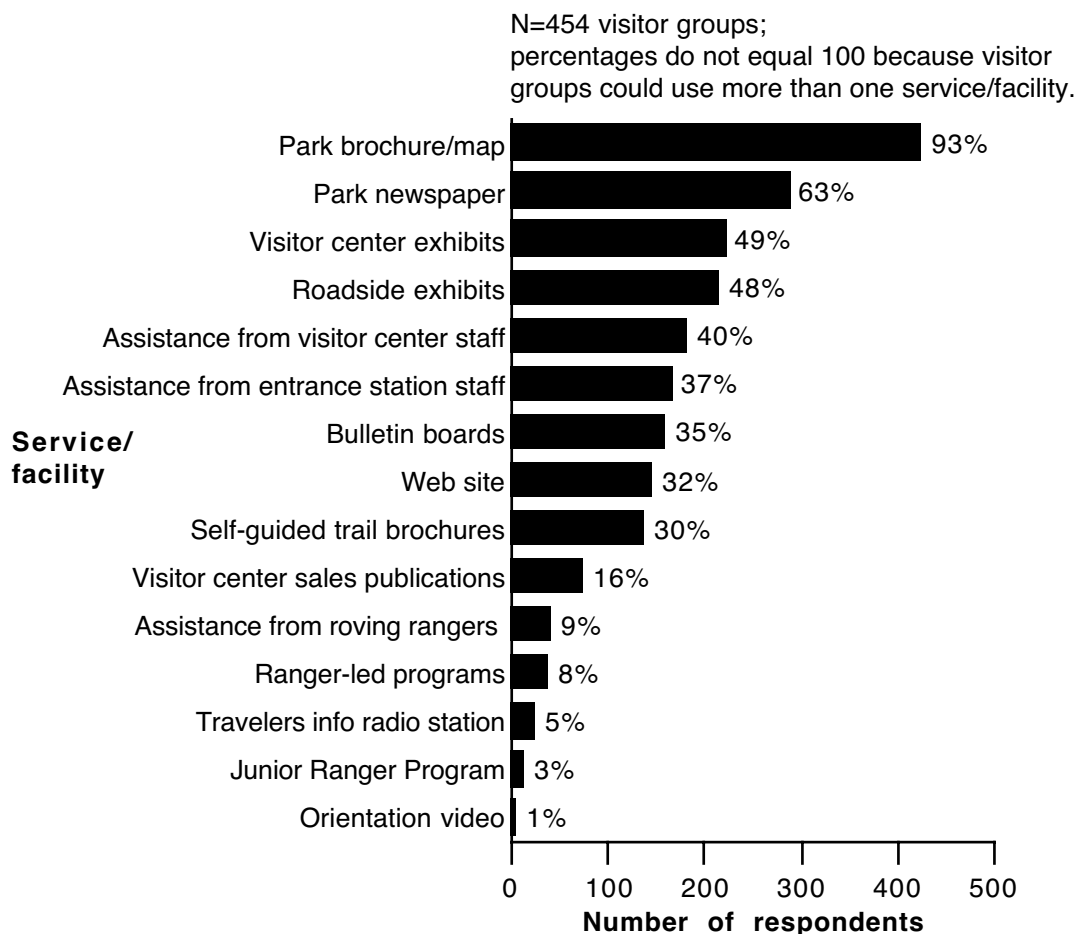


Figure 31: Information services and facilities used

Visitor groups rated the importance and quality of each of the information services and facilities they used. The following five-point scales were used in the questionnaire.

IMPORTANCE	QUALITY
5=extremely important	5=very good
4=very important	4=good
3=moderately important	3=average
2=somewhat important	2=poor
1=not important	1=very poor

The average importance and quality ratings for each information service and facility were determined based on ratings provided by visitors who used each service and facility. Figures 32 and 33 show the average importance and quality ratings for each of the park services and facilities. All services and facilities were rated above average in importance and quality. Note: travelers information radio station, orientation video, and Junior Ranger Program were not rated by enough visitors to provide reliable data.

Figures 34-48 show the visitor groups' importance ratings for each of the services/facilities. The services/facilities receiving the highest proportion of "extremely important" or "very important" ratings included park brochure/map (86%), self-guided trail brochures (83%), and assistance from visitor center staff (79%). The highest proportion of "not important" ratings were for assistance from entrance station staff (4%).

Figures 49-63 show the visitor groups' quality ratings for each of the services/facilities. The services/facilities receiving the highest proportion of "very good" or "good" ratings included assistance from visitor center staff (92%), ranger-led programs (89%), and assistance from roving rangers (88%). The services/facilities receiving the highest "very poor" rating by visitor groups were assistance from entrance station staff (3%) and ranger-led programs (3%).

Figure 64 combines the "very good" and "good" quality ratings and compares those ratings for all of the information services and facilities.

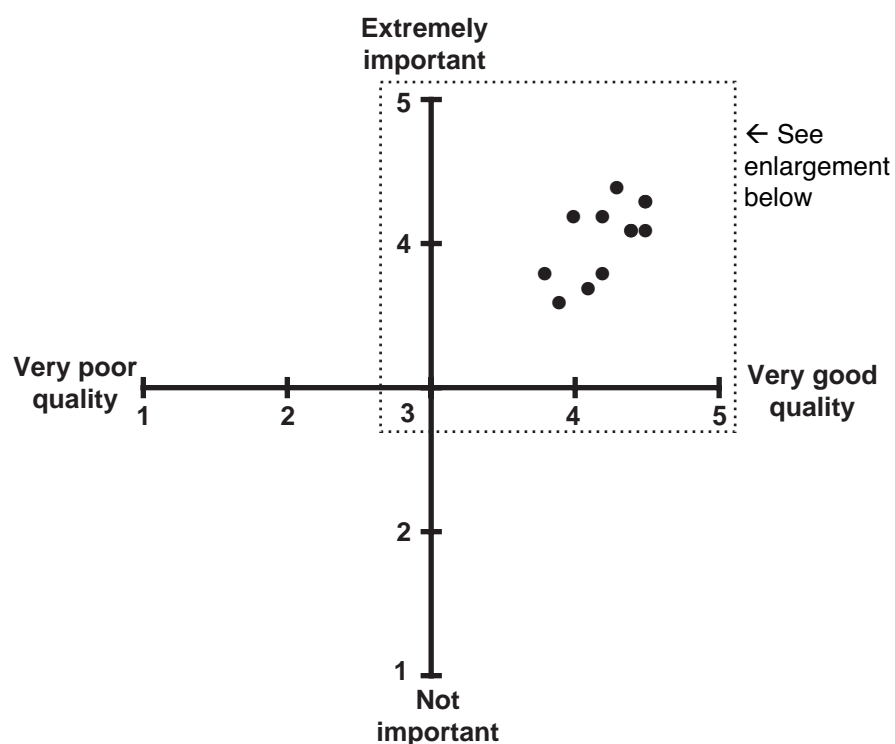


Figure 32: Average importance and quality ratings for information services and facilities

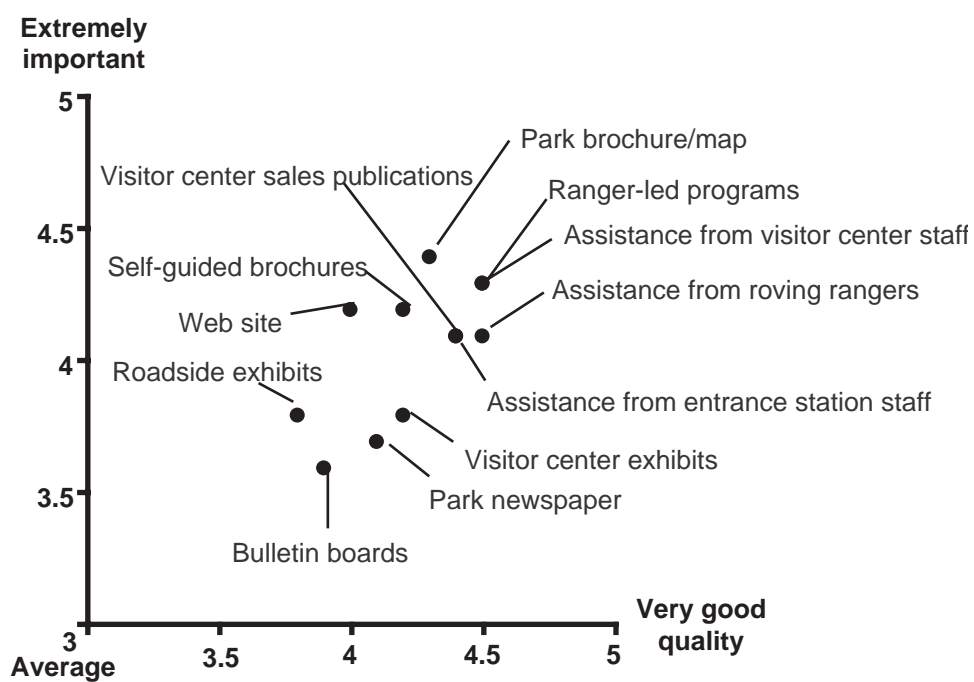


Figure 33: Detail of Figure 32

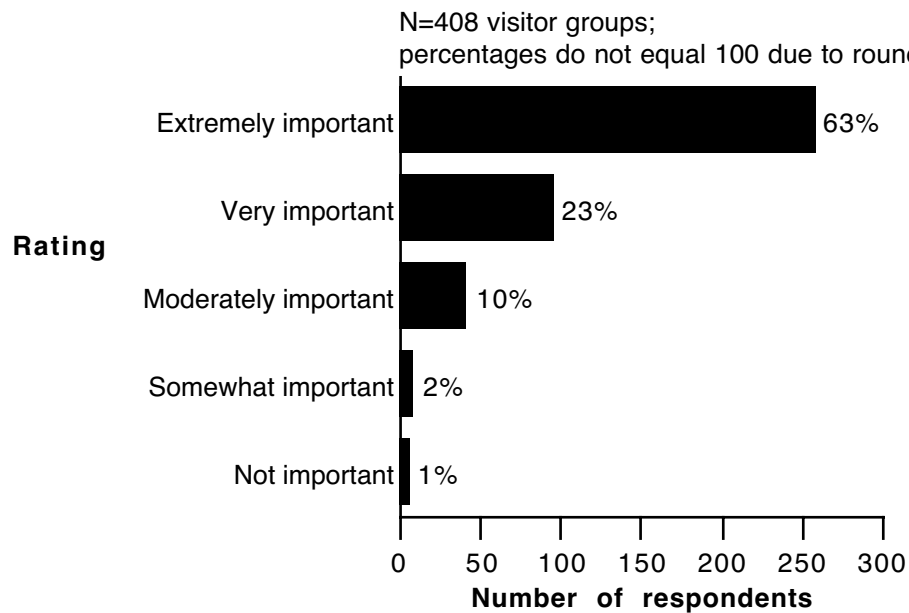


Figure 34: Importance of park brochure/map

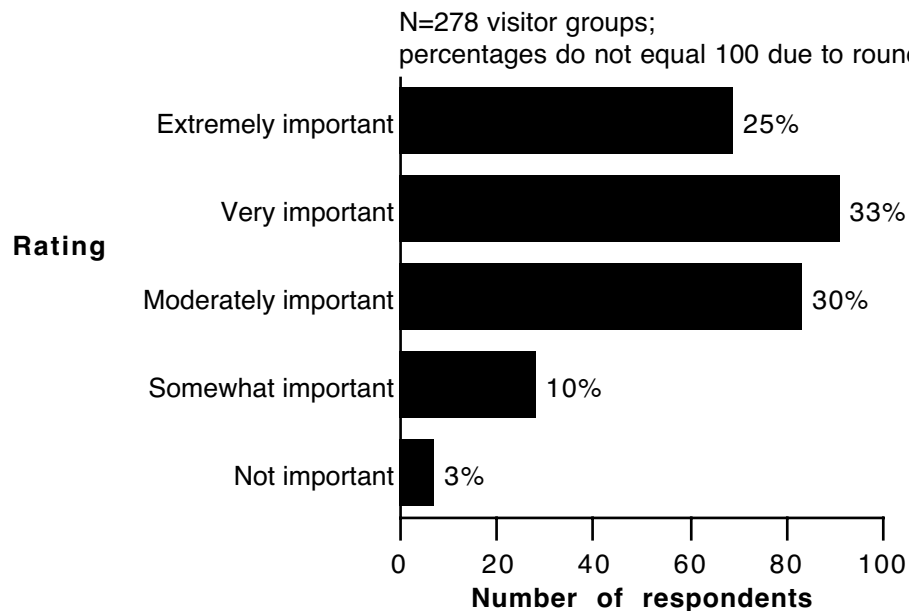


Figure 35: Importance of park newspaper

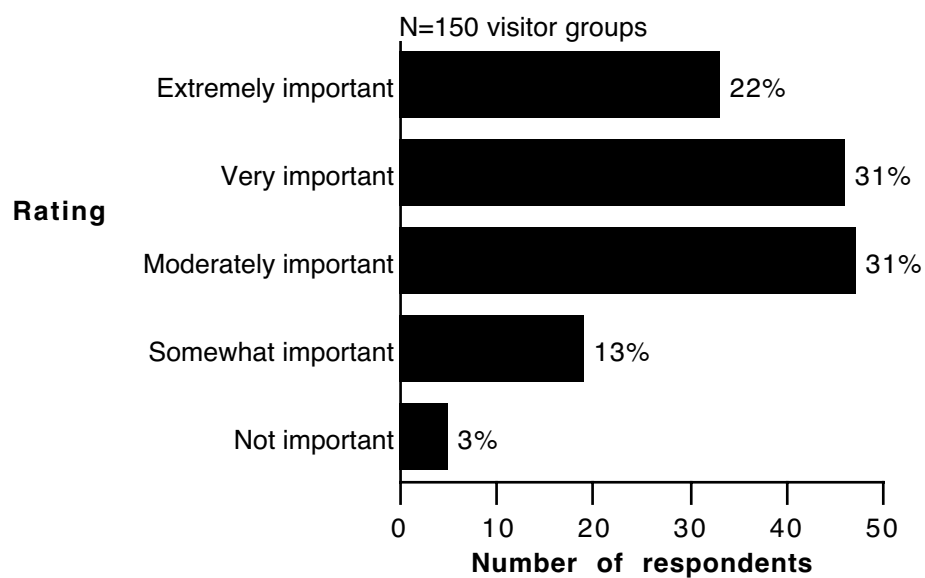


Figure 36: Importance of bulletin boards

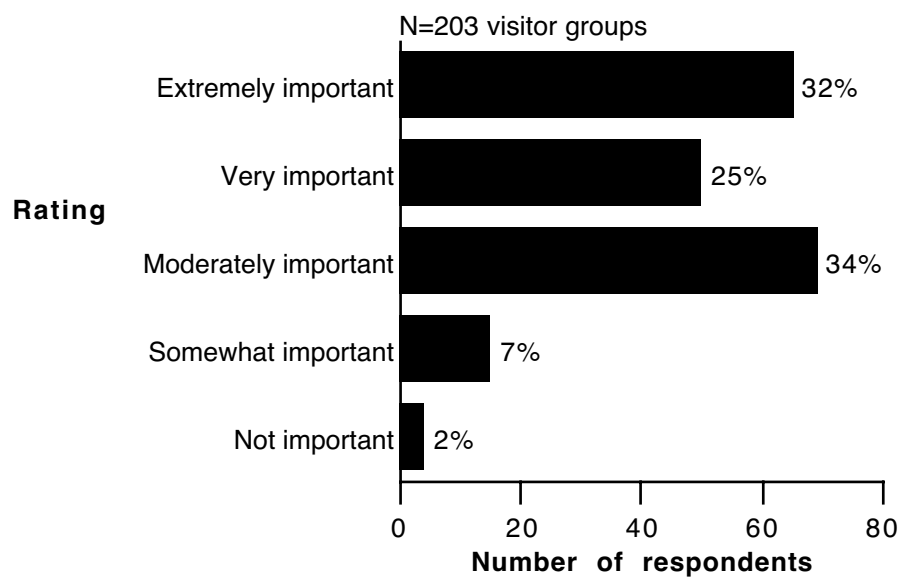


Figure 37: Importance of roadside exhibits

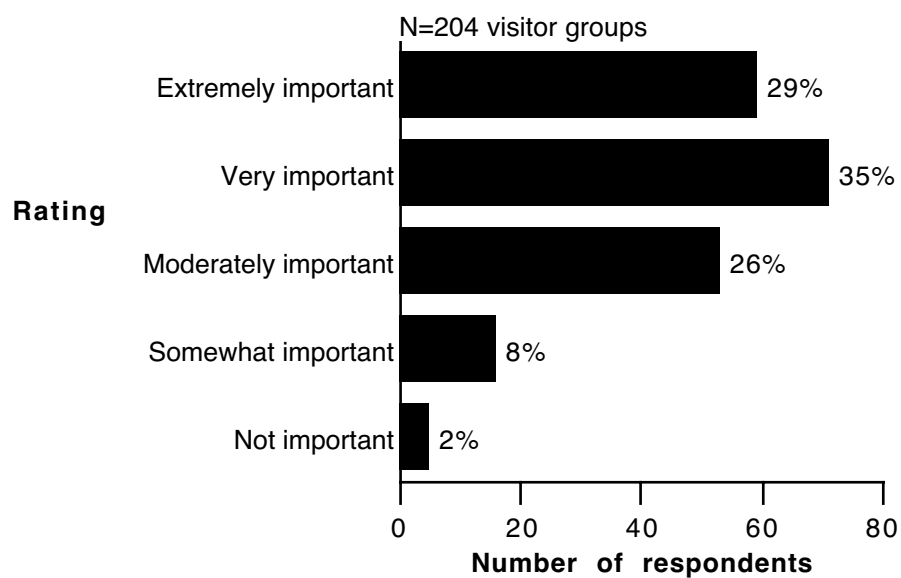


Figure 38: Importance of visitor center exhibits

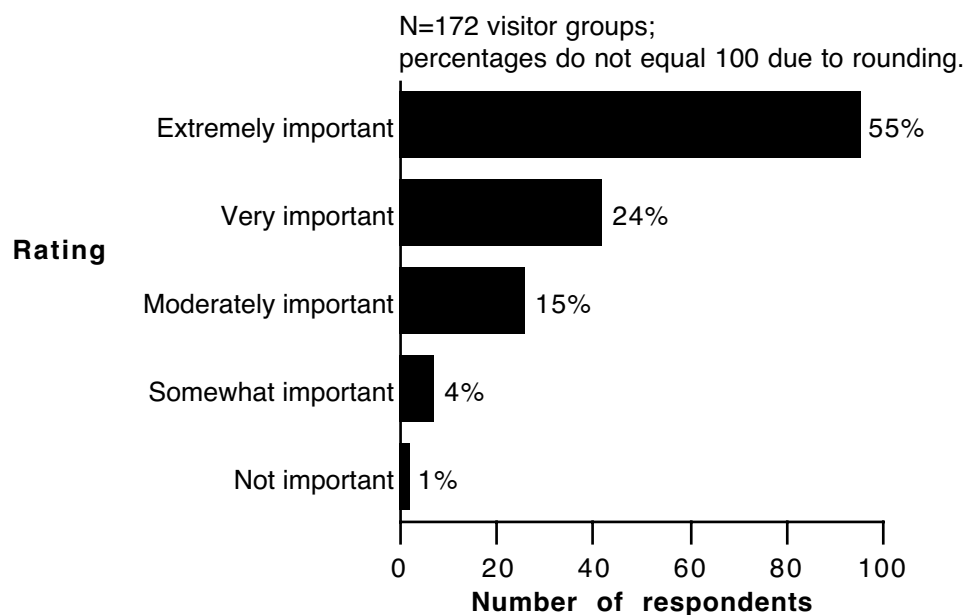


Figure 39: Importance of assistance from visitor center staff

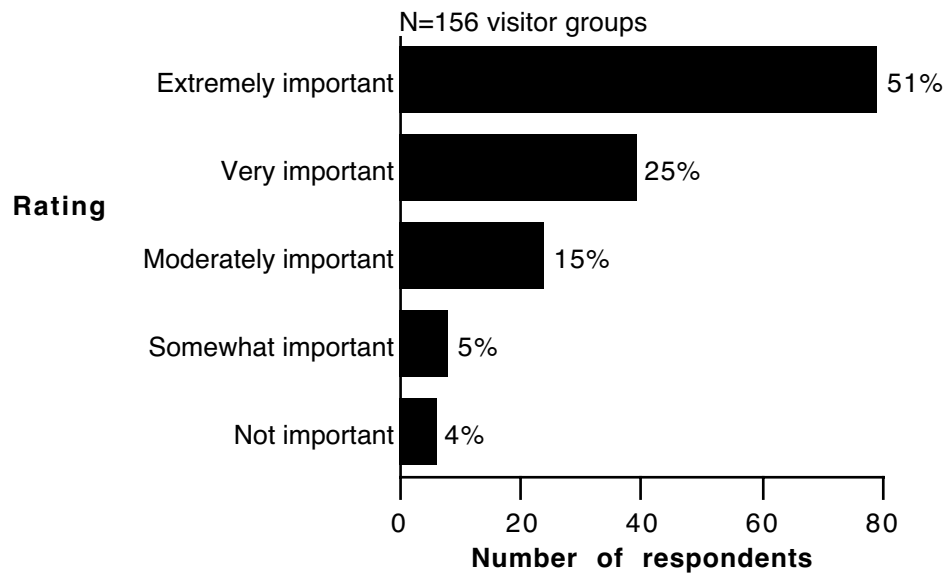


Figure 40: Importance of assistance from entrance station staff

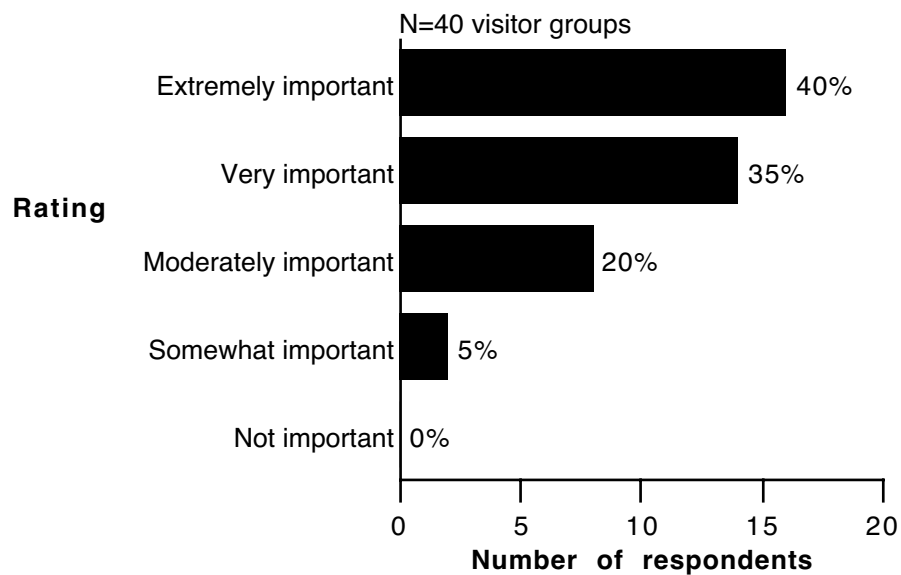


Figure 41: Importance of assistance from roving rangers

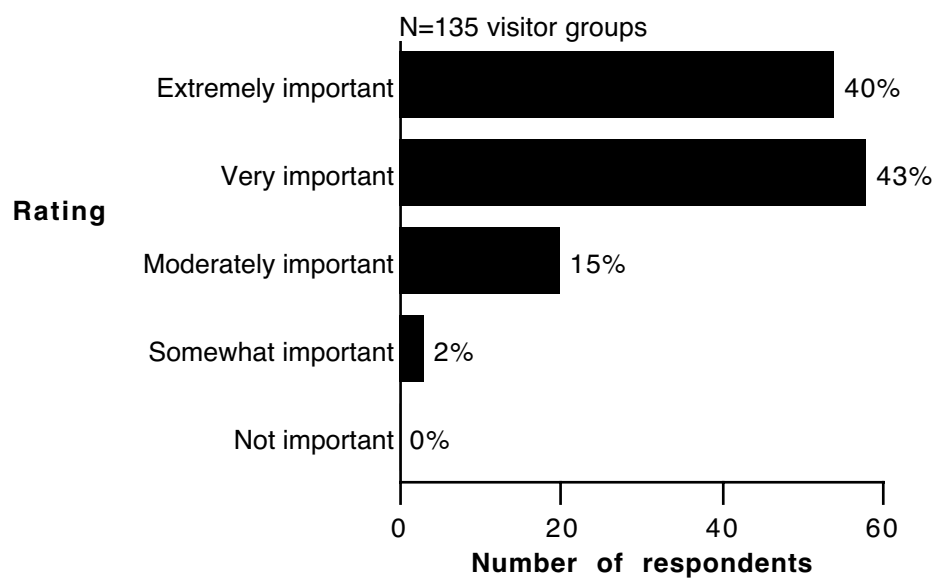


Figure 42: Importance of self-guided trail brochures

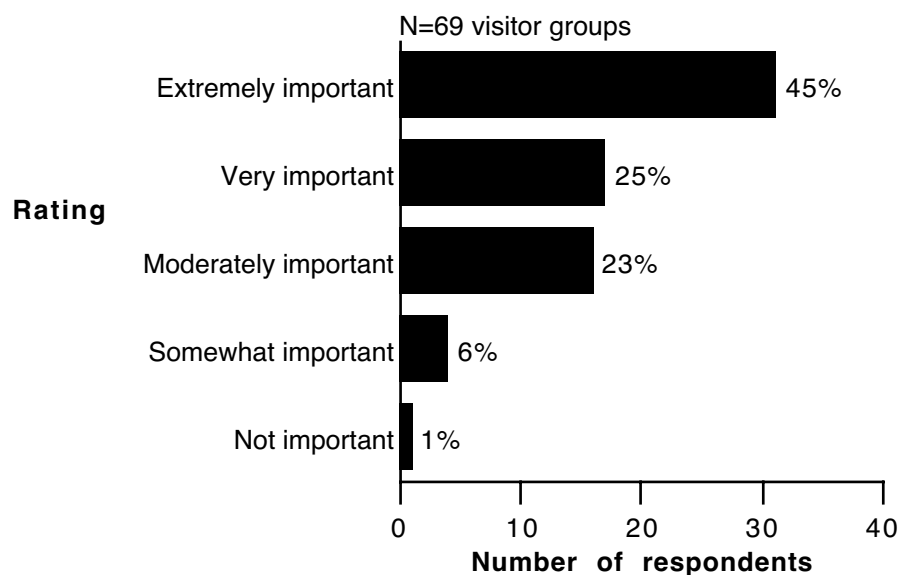


Figure 43: Importance of visitor sales publications

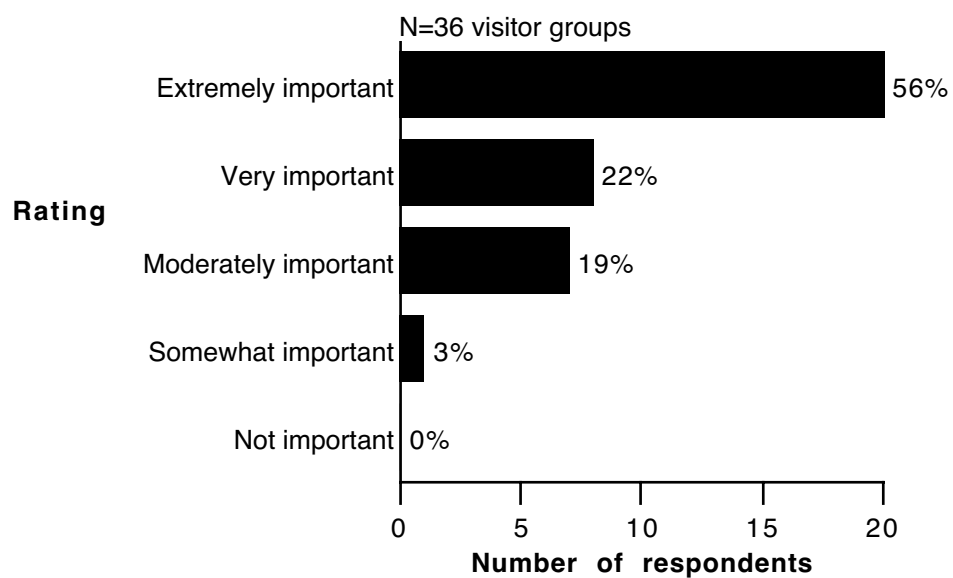


Figure 44: Importance of ranger-led programs

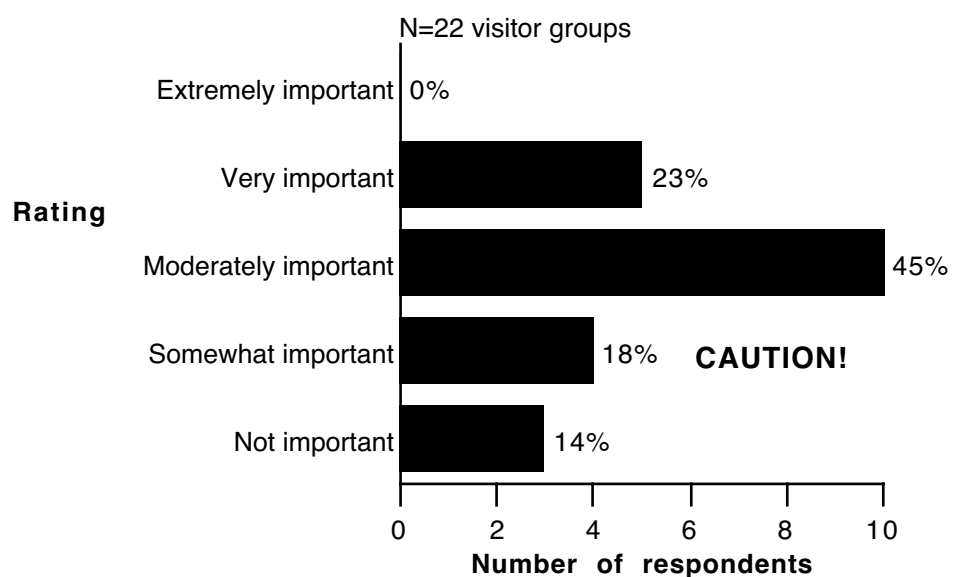


Figure 45: Importance of travelers information radio station

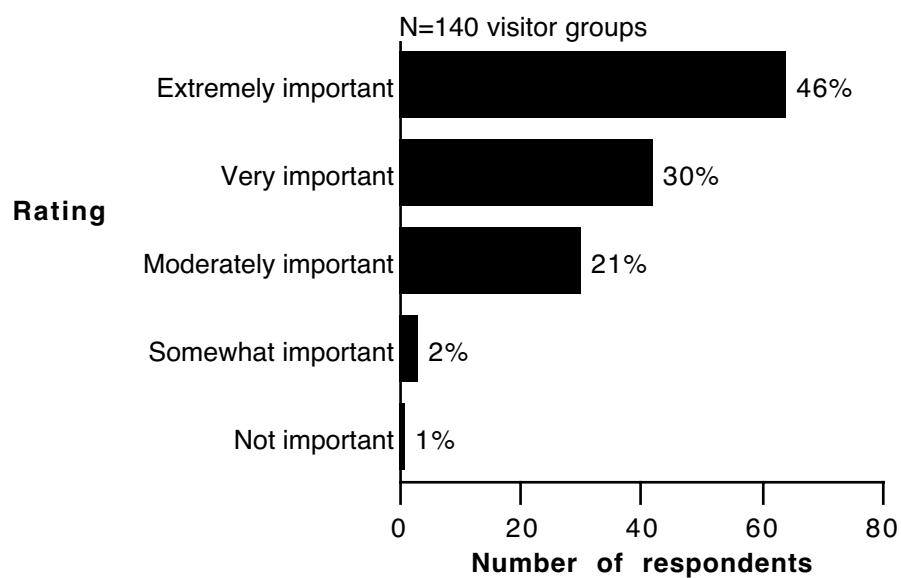


Figure 46: Importance of web site use before or during visit

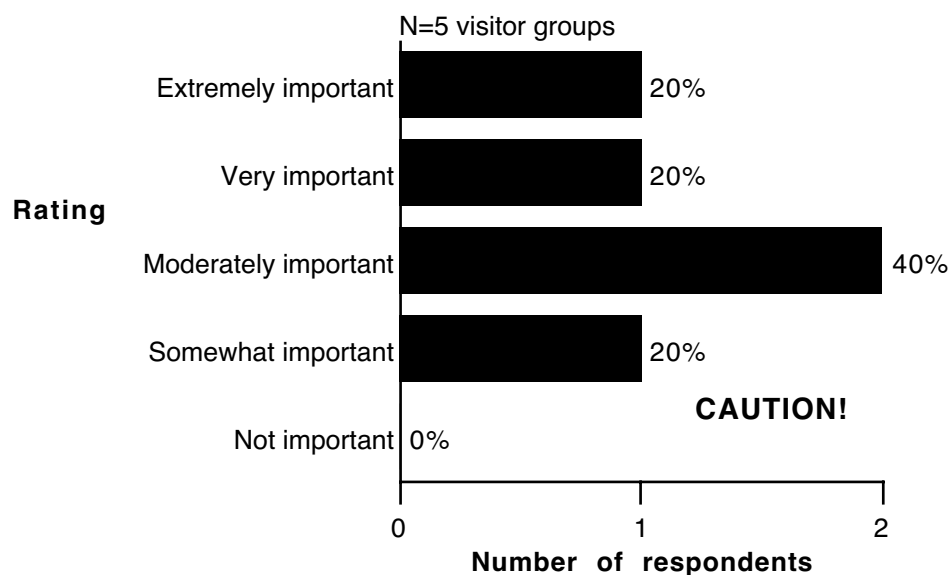


Figure 47: Importance of orientation video

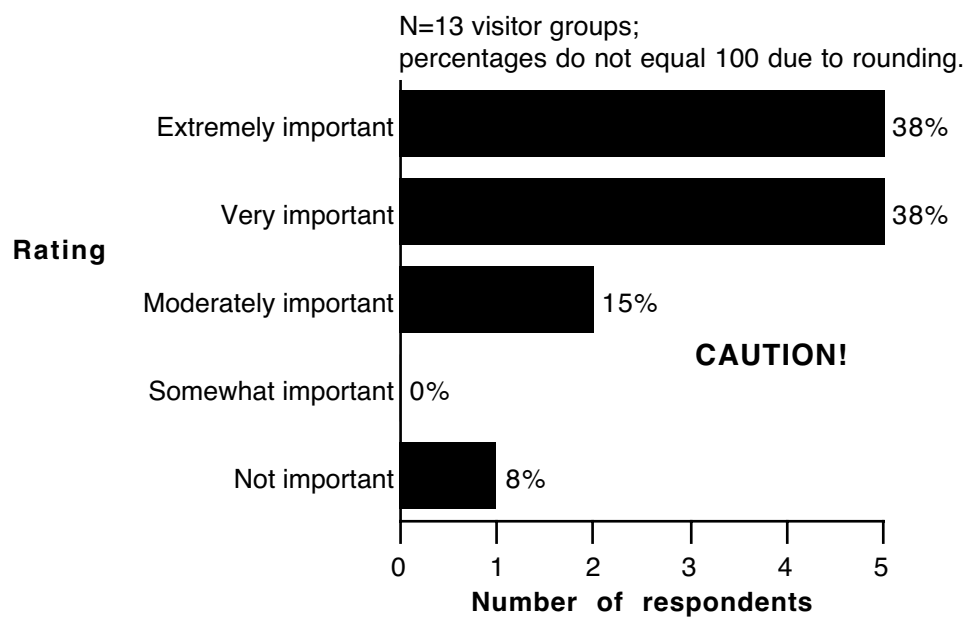


Figure 48: Importance of Junior Ranger Program

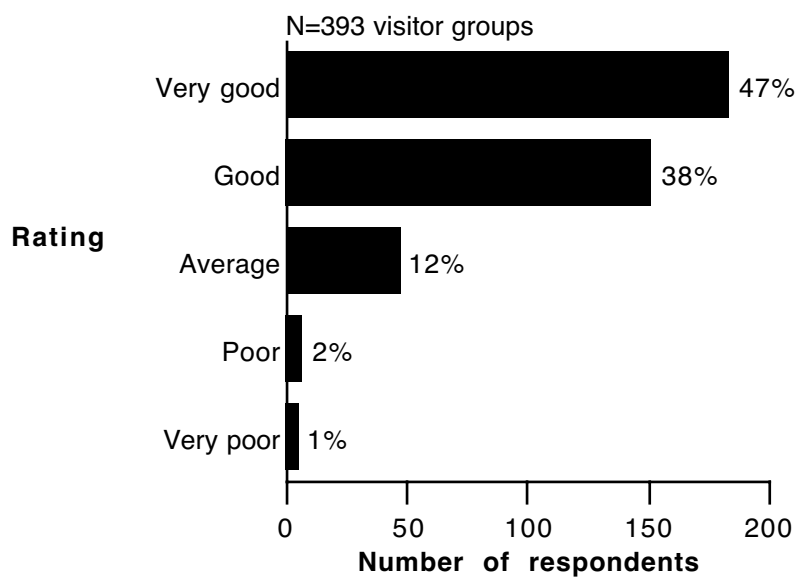


Figure 49: Quality of park brochure/map

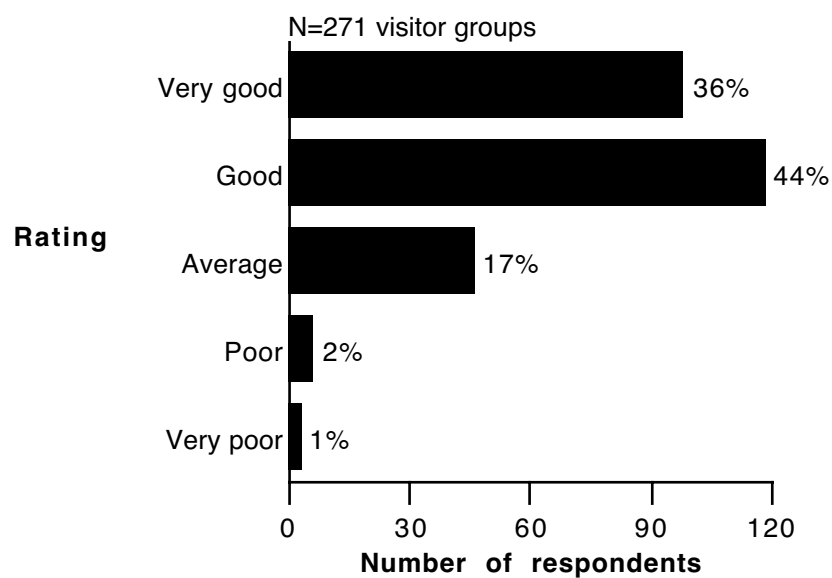


Figure 50: Quality of park newspaper

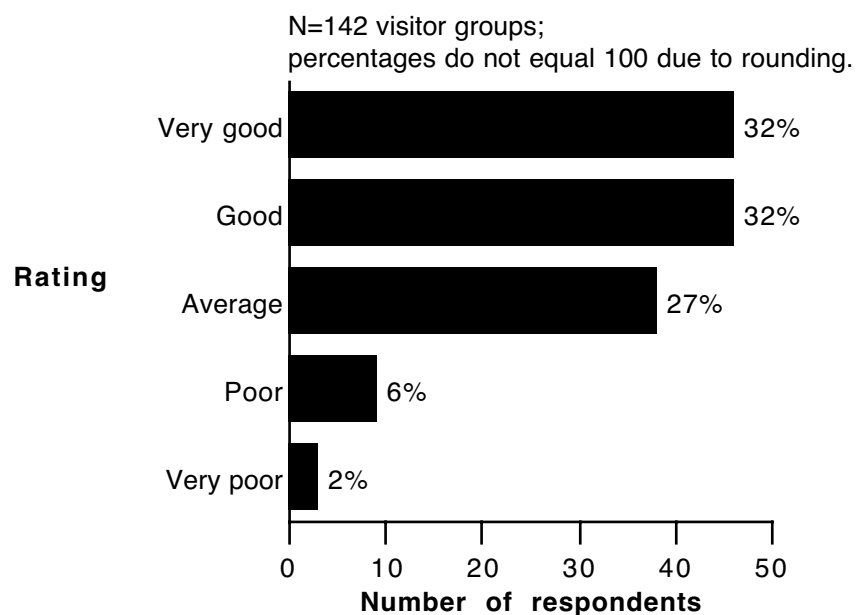


Figure 51: Quality of bulletin boards

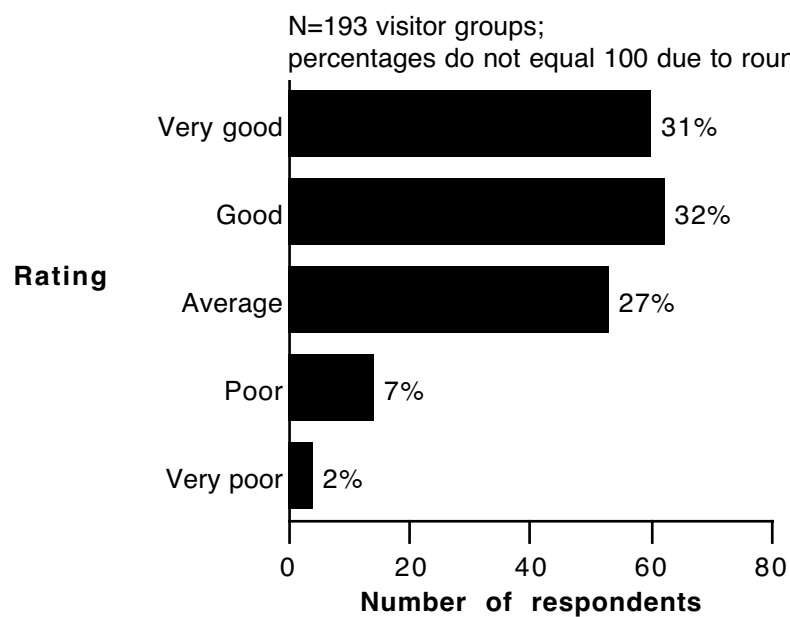


Figure 52: Quality of roadside exhibits

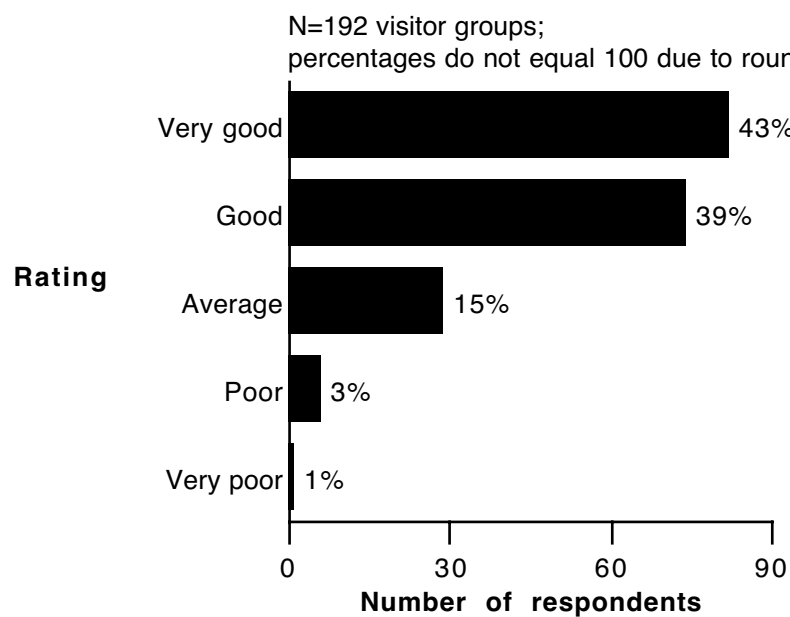


Figure 53: Quality of visitor center exhibits

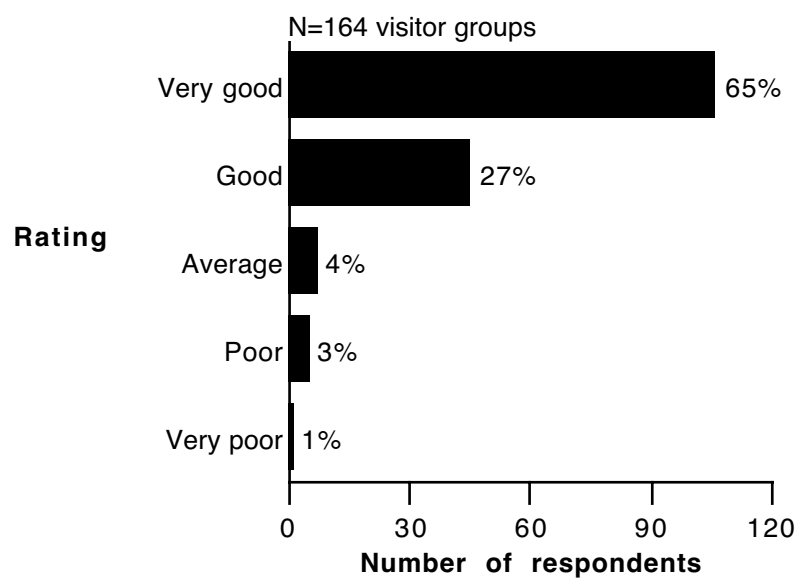


Figure 54: Quality of assistance from visitor center staff

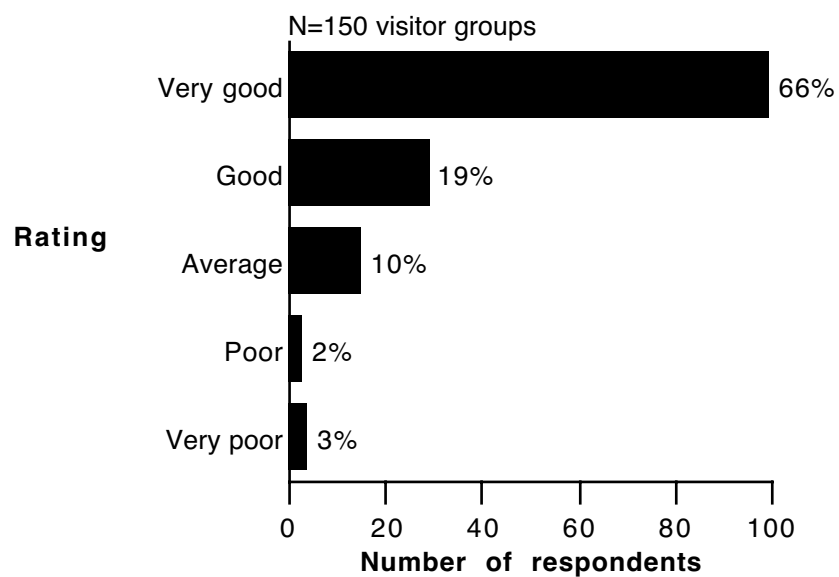


Figure 55: Quality of assistance from entrance station staff

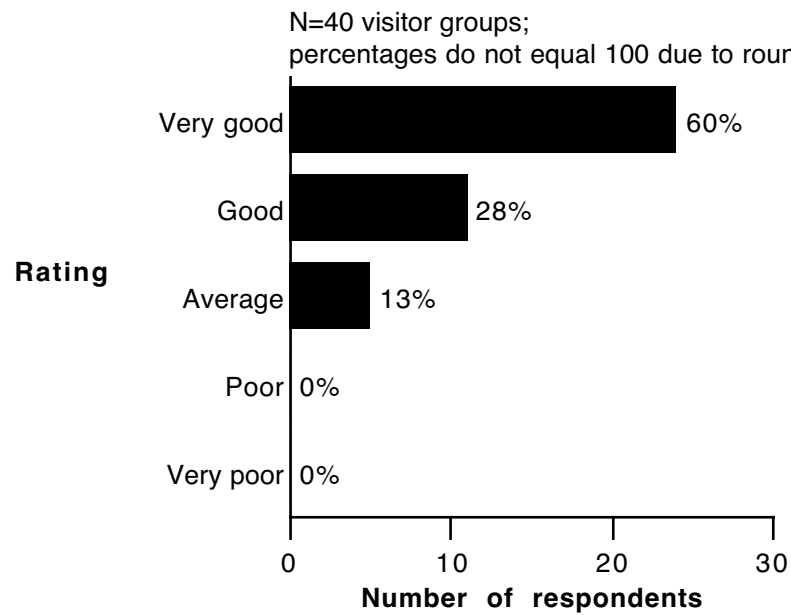


Figure 56: Quality of assistance from roving rangers

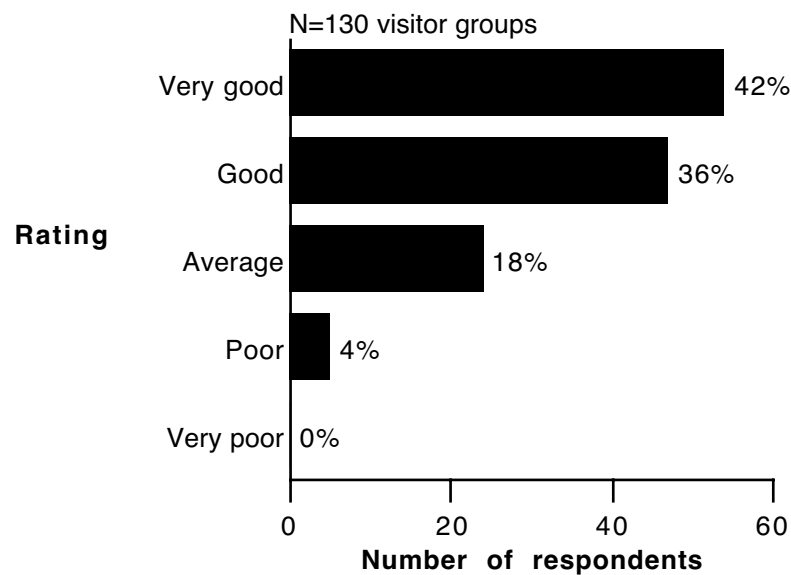


Figure 57: Quality of self-guided trail brochures

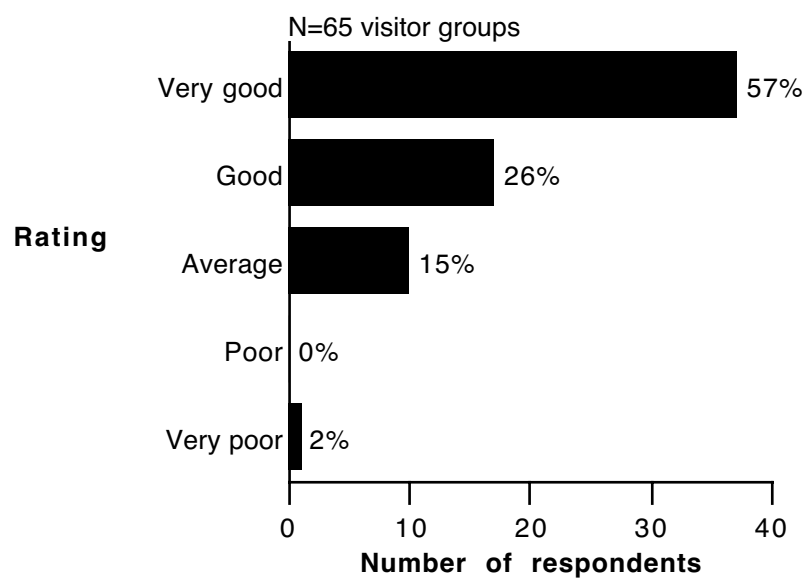


Figure 58: Quality of visitor center sales publications

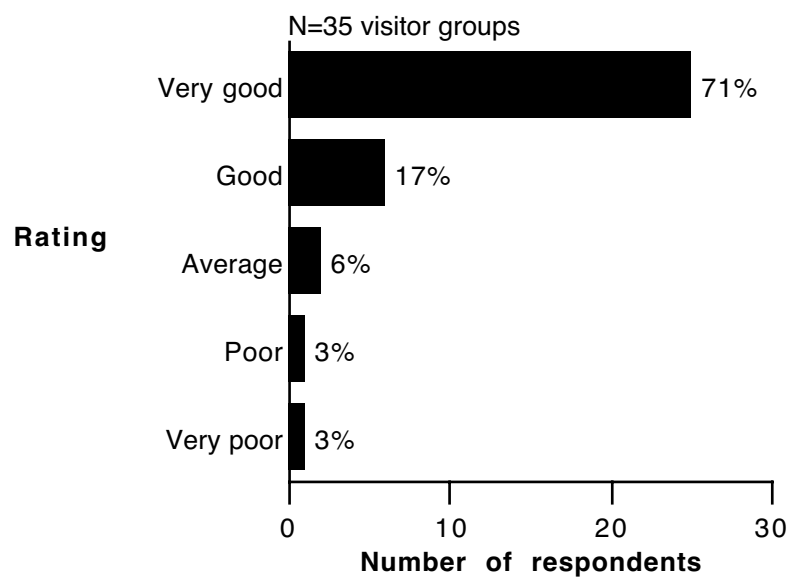


Figure 59: Quality of ranger-led programs

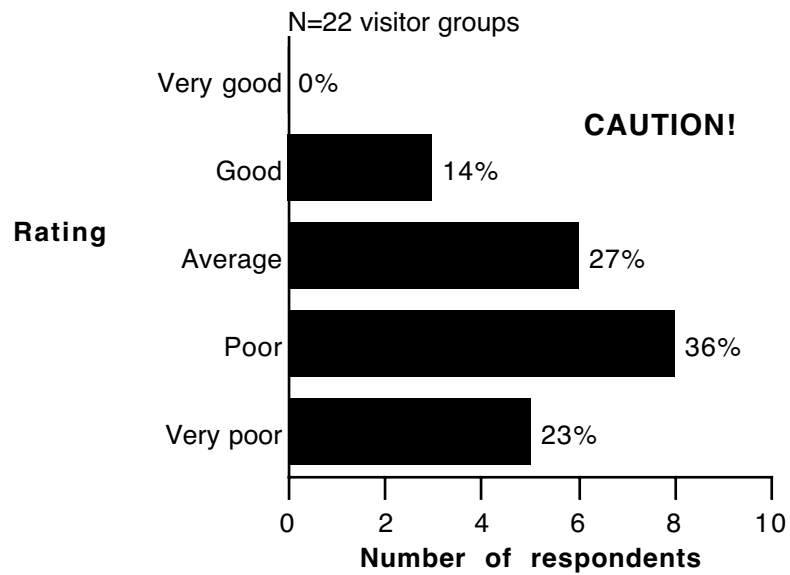


Figure 60: Quality of travelers information radio station

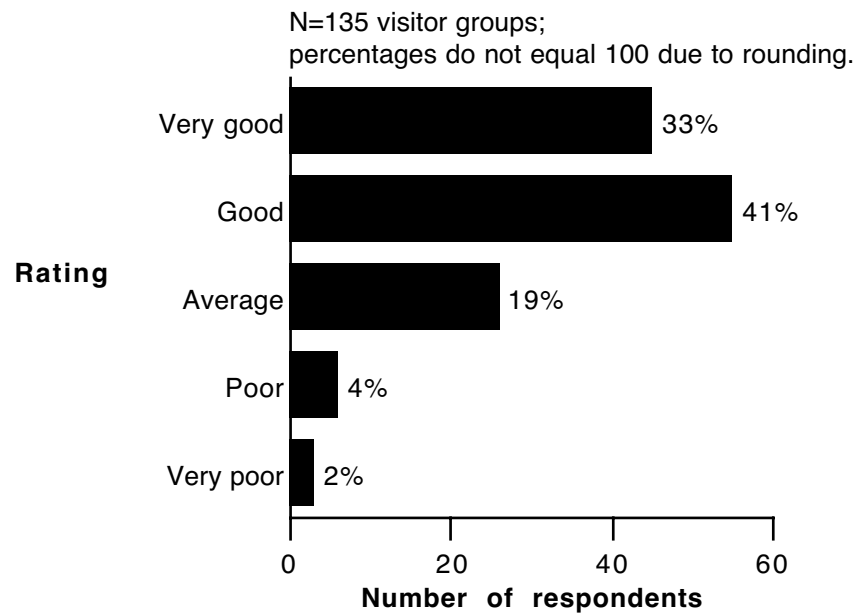


Figure 61: Quality of web site use before or during visit

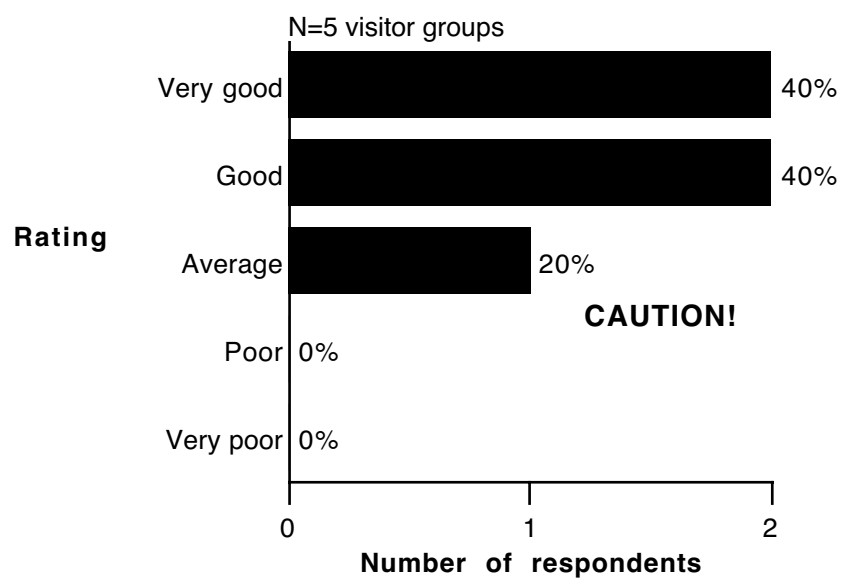


Figure 62: Quality of orientation video

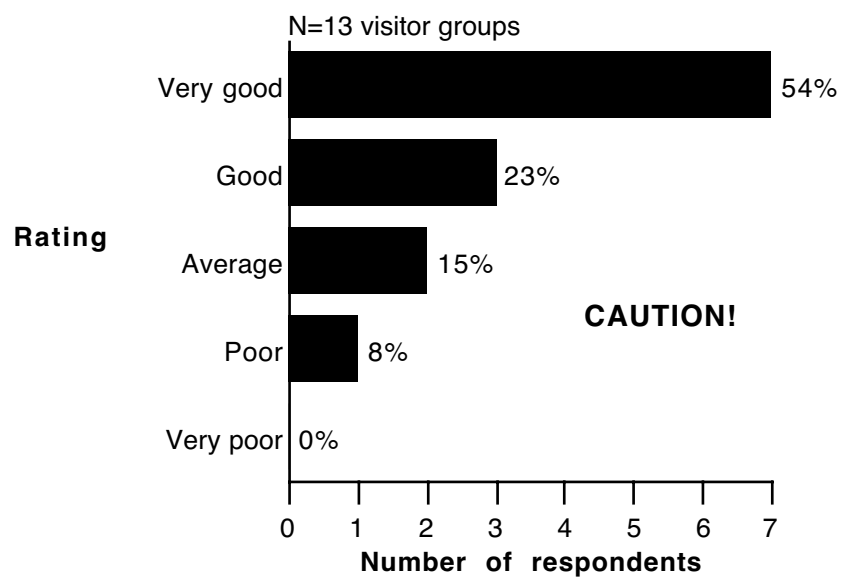


Figure 63: Quality of Junior Ranger Program

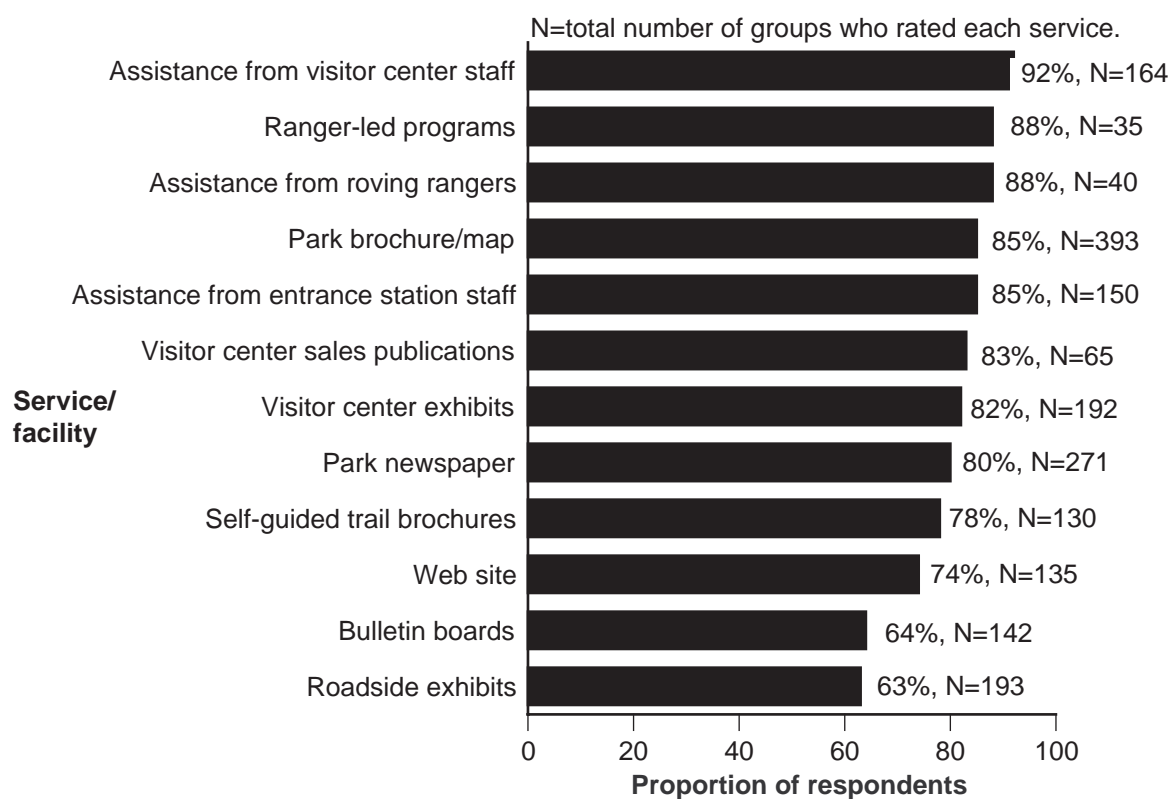


Figure 64: Combined “good” and “very good” quality ratings for information services and facilities

Visitor services and facilities: use, importance, and quality

During this visit to Joshua Tree NP, the most used visitor services and facilities were directional road signs-inside the park (86%), restrooms (85%), and paved roads (81%), as shown in Figure 65. The least used service was access for disabled persons (1%).

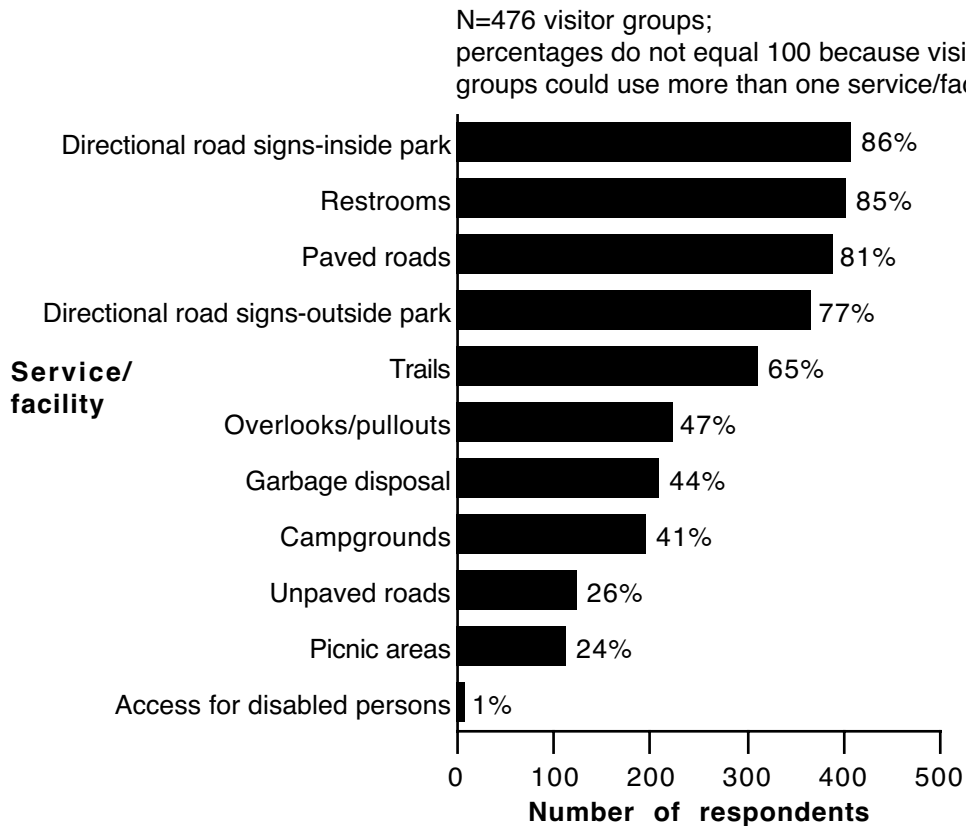


Figure 65: Visitor services and facilities used

Visitor groups rated the importance and quality of each of the visitor services and facilities they used. The following five-point scales were used in the questionnaire.

IMPORTANCE	QUALITY
5=extremely important	5=very good
4=very important	4=good
3=moderately important	3=average
2=somewhat important	2=poor
1=not important	1=very poor

The average importance and quality ratings for each visitor service and facility were determined based on ratings provided by visitors who used each service and facility. Figures 66 and 67 show the average importance and quality ratings for each of the park services and facilities. All services and facilities were rated above average in importance and quality. Note: access for disabled persons was not rated by enough visitors to provide reliable data.

Figures 68-78 show the importance ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the services/facilities. The services/facilities receiving the highest proportion of “extremely important” or “very important” ratings included campgrounds (96%), trails (92%), and restrooms (91%). The highest proportion of “not important” ratings was for unpaved roads (3%).

Figures 79-89 show the quality ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the services/facilities. The services/facilities receiving the highest proportion of “very good” or “good” ratings included trails (87%), overlooks/pullouts (85%), and garbage disposal (84%). The facility receiving the highest “very poor” rating by visitor groups was unpaved roads (3%).

Figure 90 combines the “very good” and “good” quality ratings and compares those ratings for all of the visitor services and facilities.

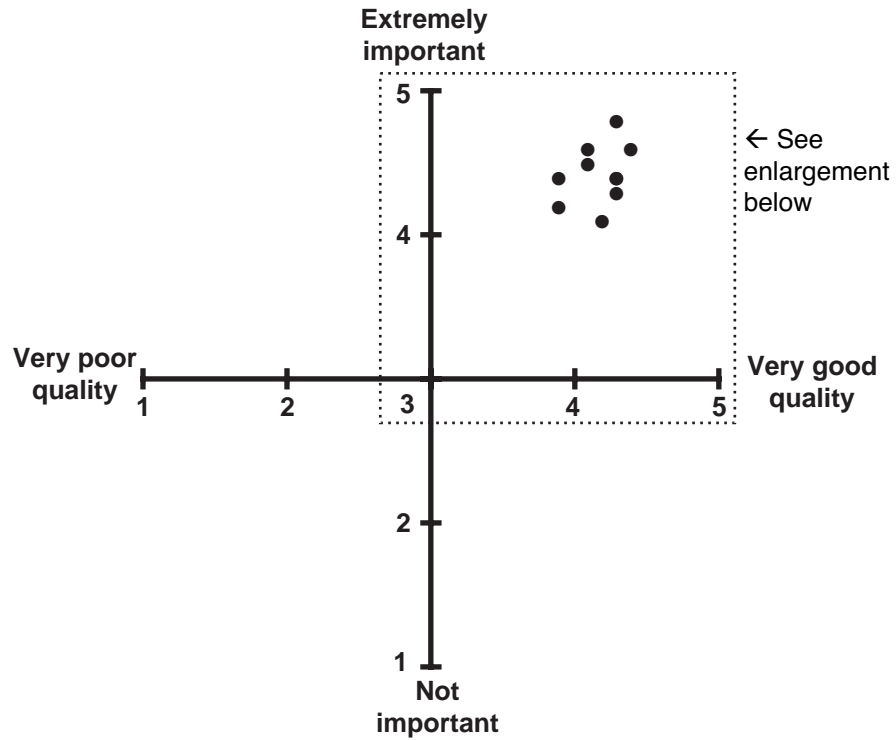


Figure 66: Average importance and quality ratings for visitor services and facilities

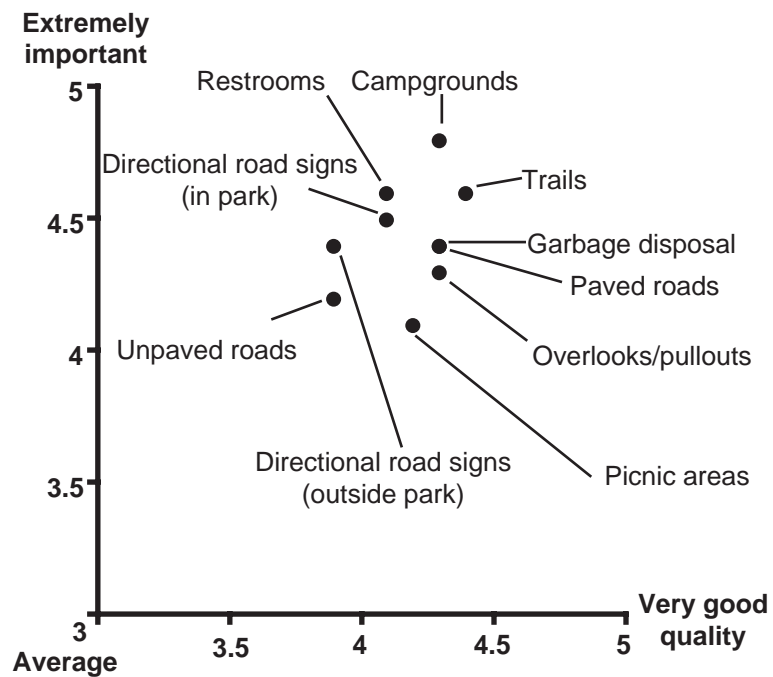


Figure 67: Detail of Figure 66

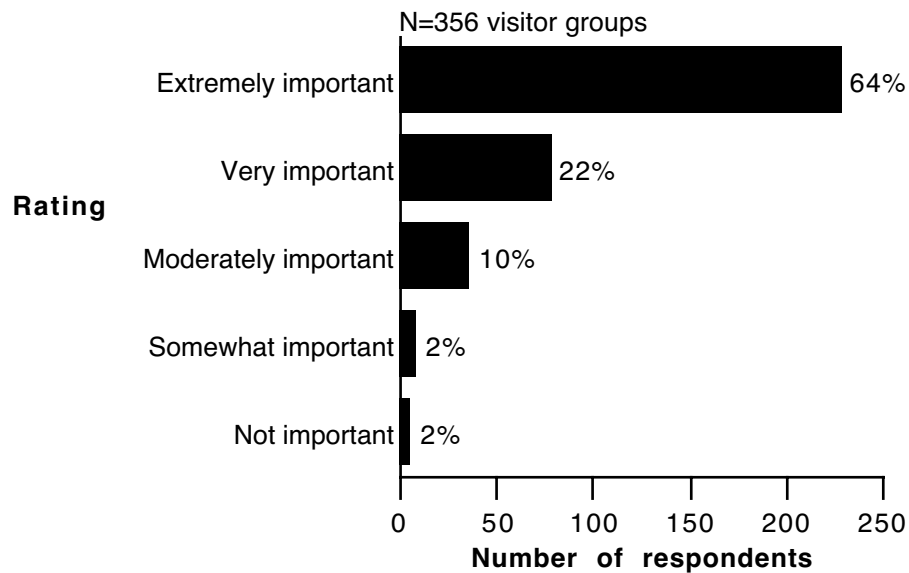


Figure 68: Importance of directional road signs – outside park

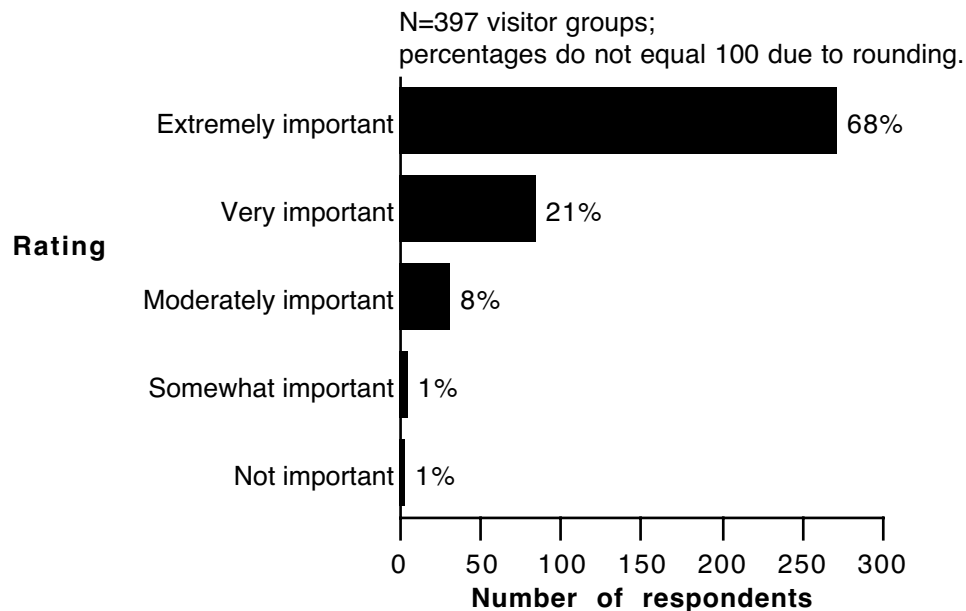


Figure 69: Importance of directional road signs – inside park

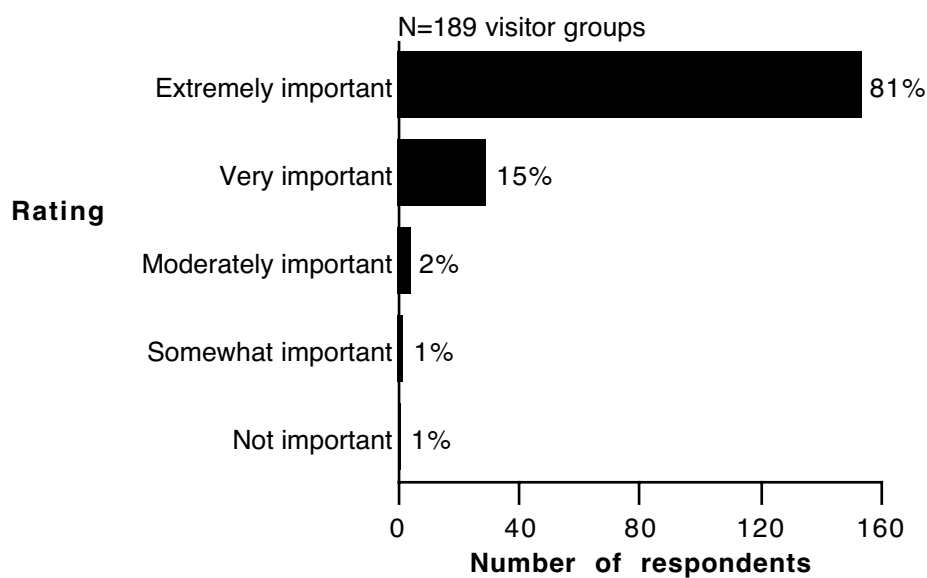


Figure 70: Importance of campgrounds

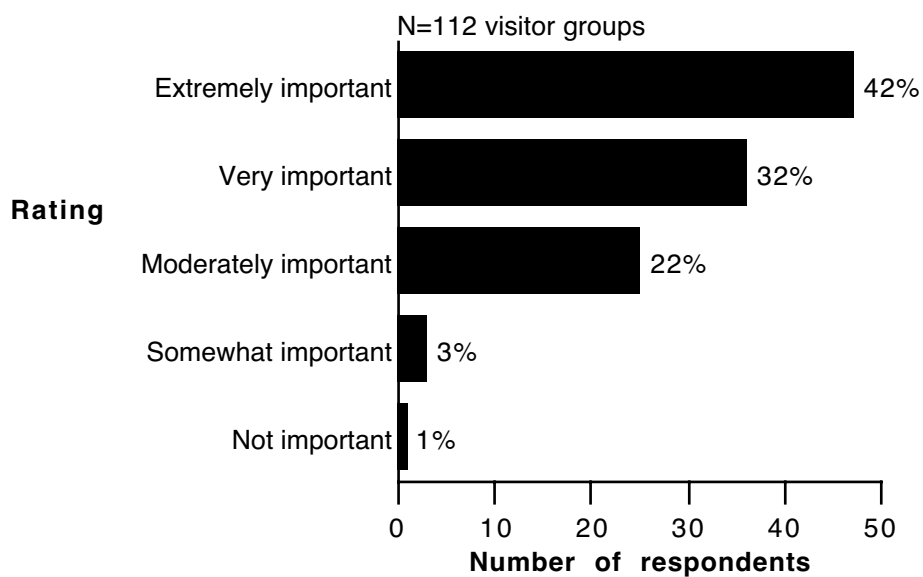


Figure 71: Importance of picnic areas

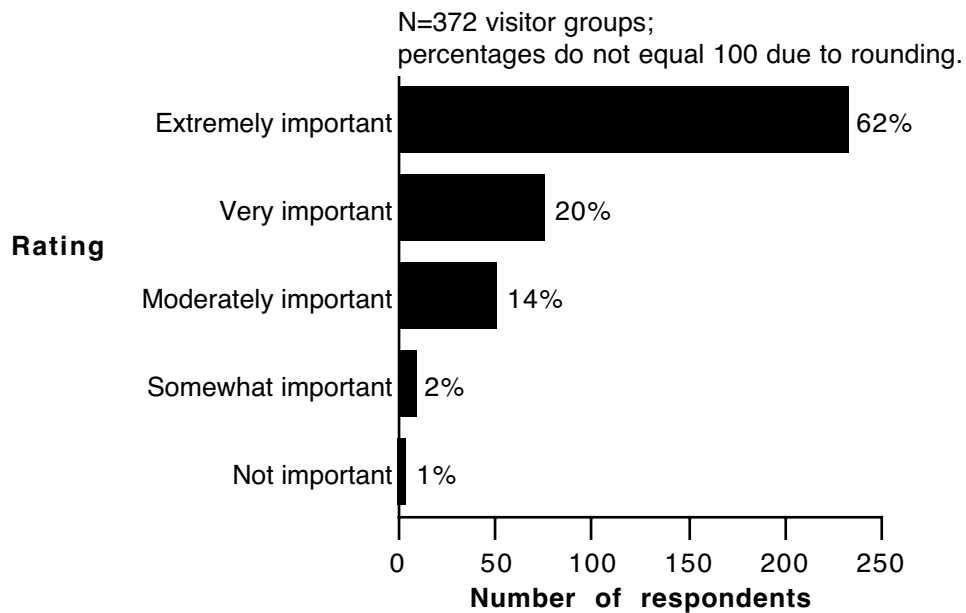


Figure 72: Importance of paved roads

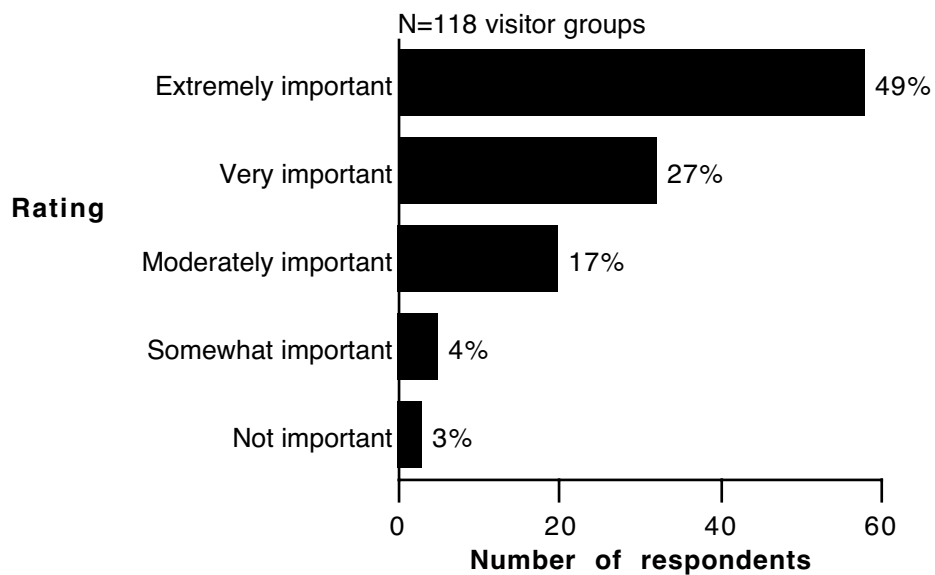


Figure 73: Importance of unpaved roads

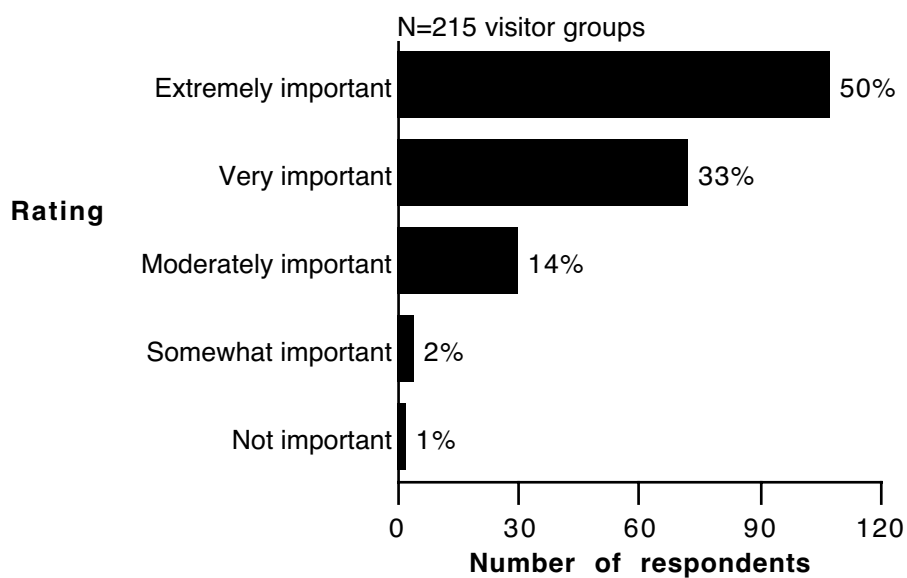


Figure 74: Importance of overlooks/pullouts

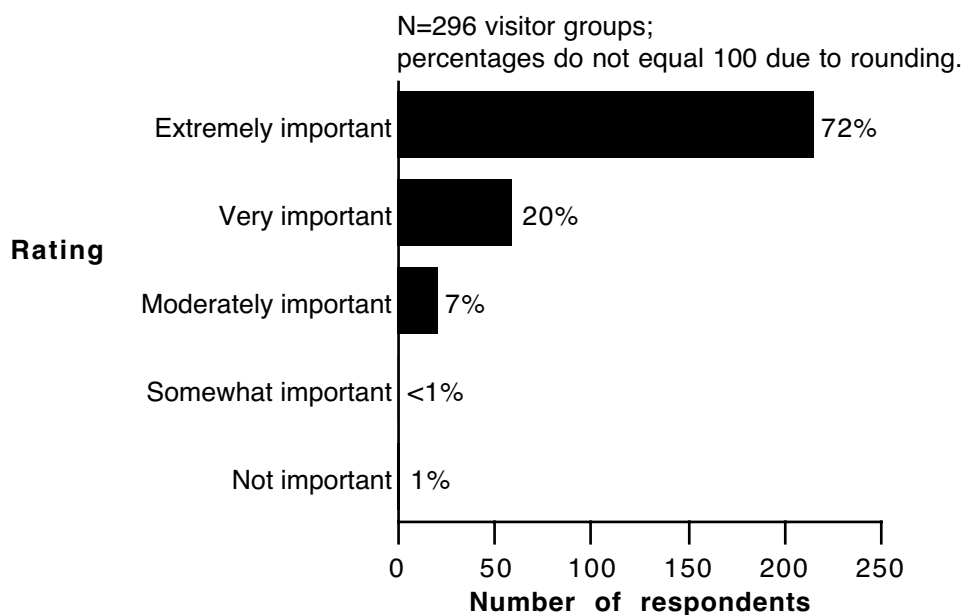


Figure 75: Importance of trails

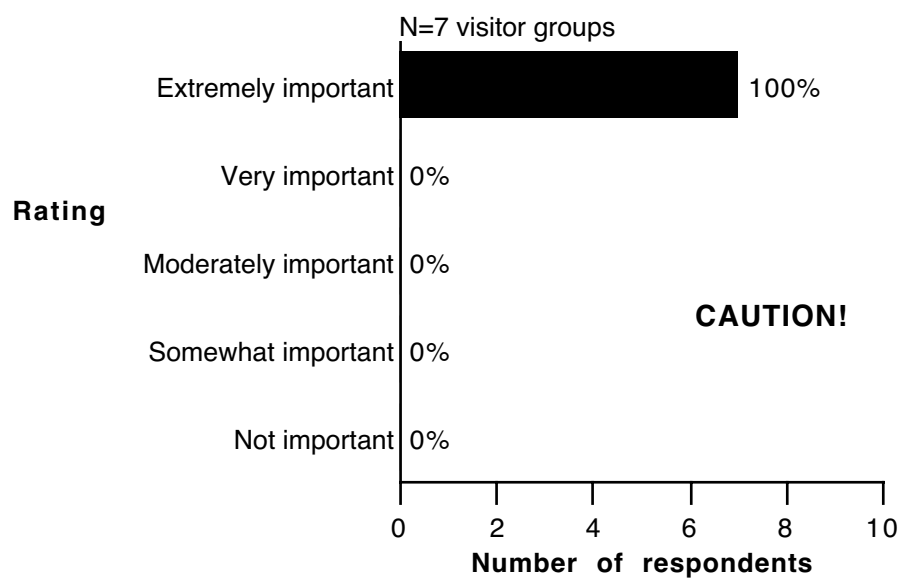


Figure 76: Importance of access for disabled persons

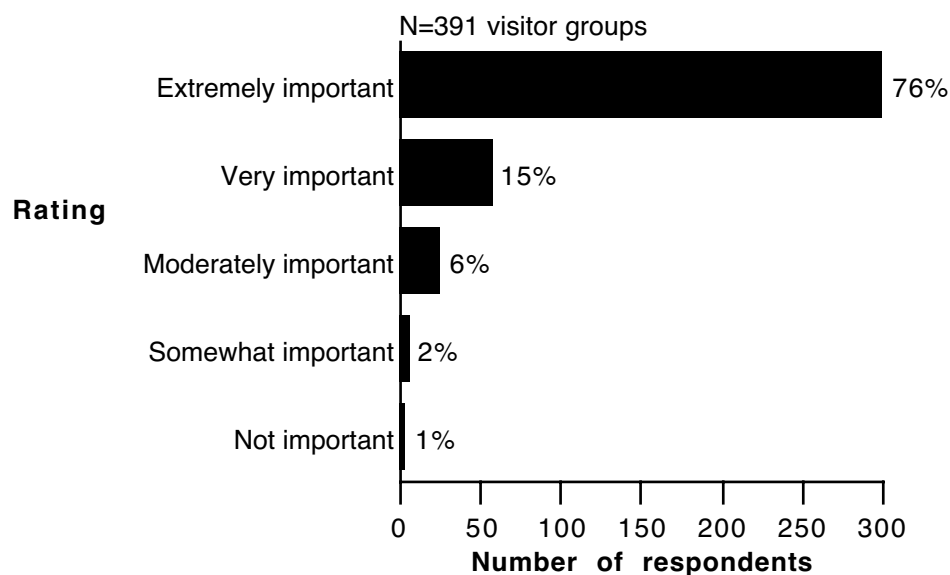


Figure 77: Importance of restrooms

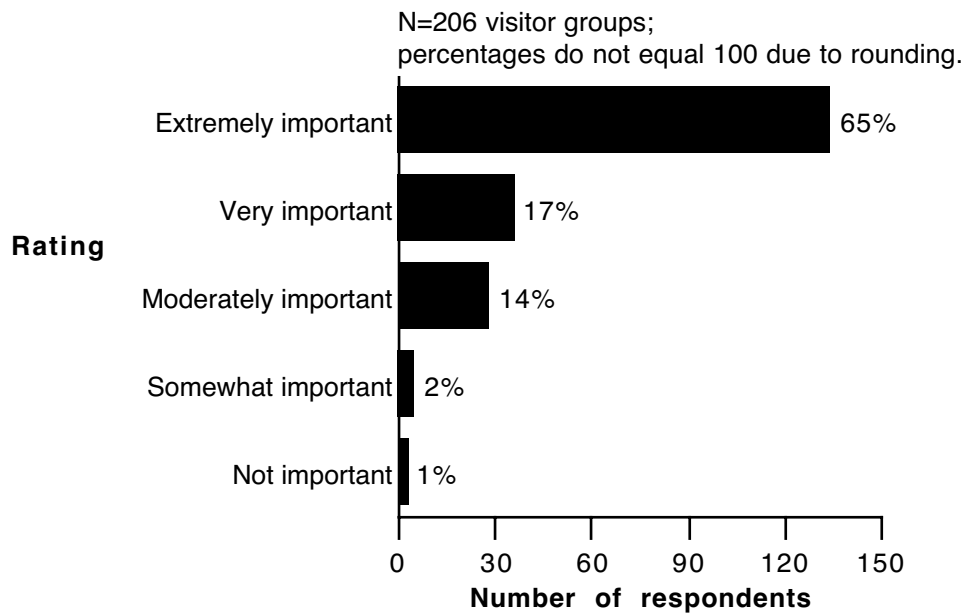


Figure 78: Importance of garbage disposal

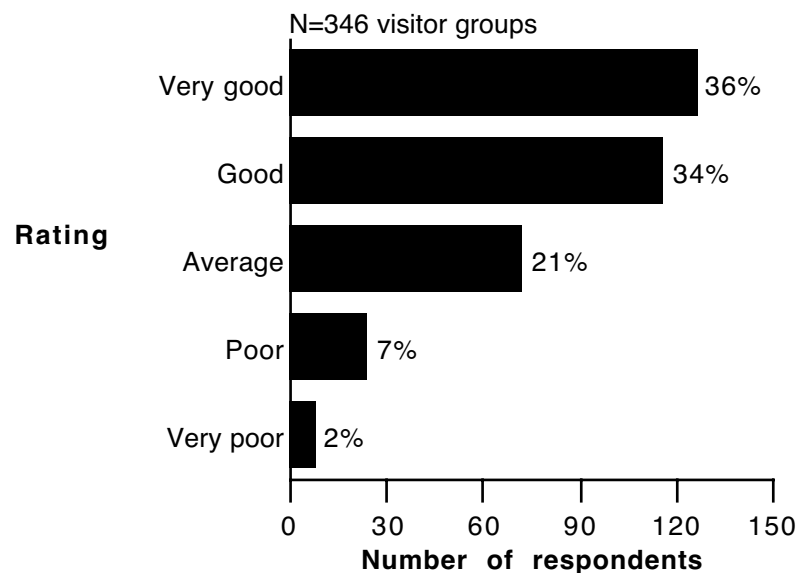


Figure 79: Quality of directional road signs – outside park

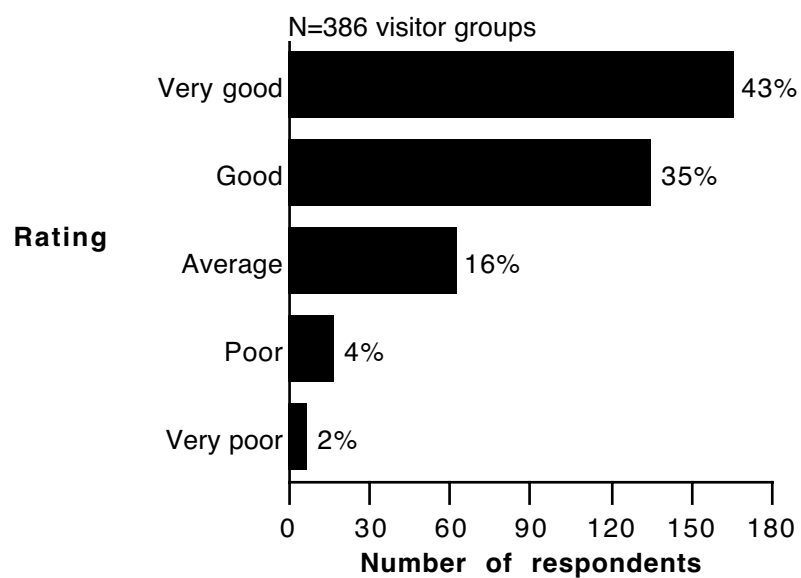


Figure 80: Quality of directional road signs – inside park

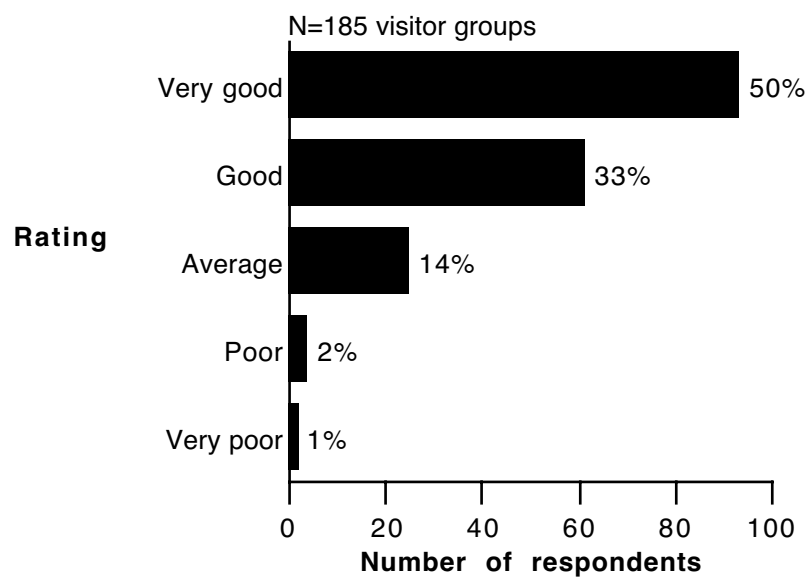


Figure 81: Quality of campgrounds

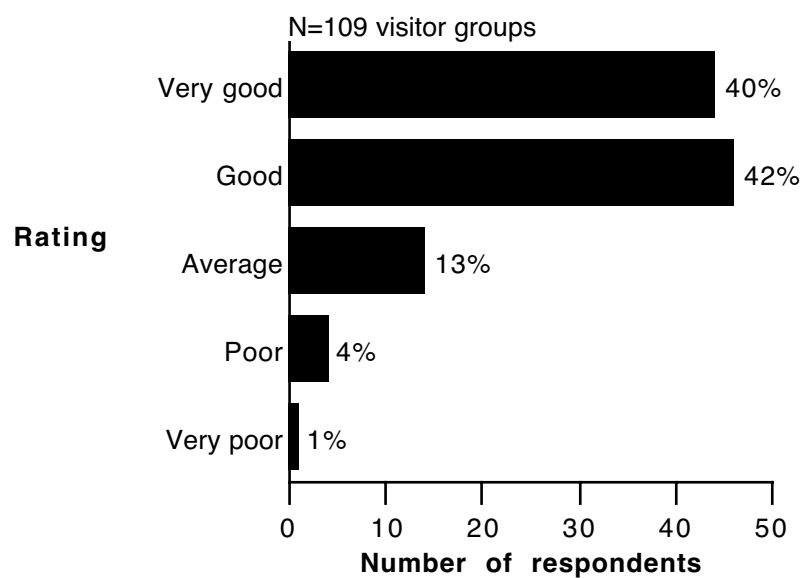


Figure 82: Quality of picnic areas

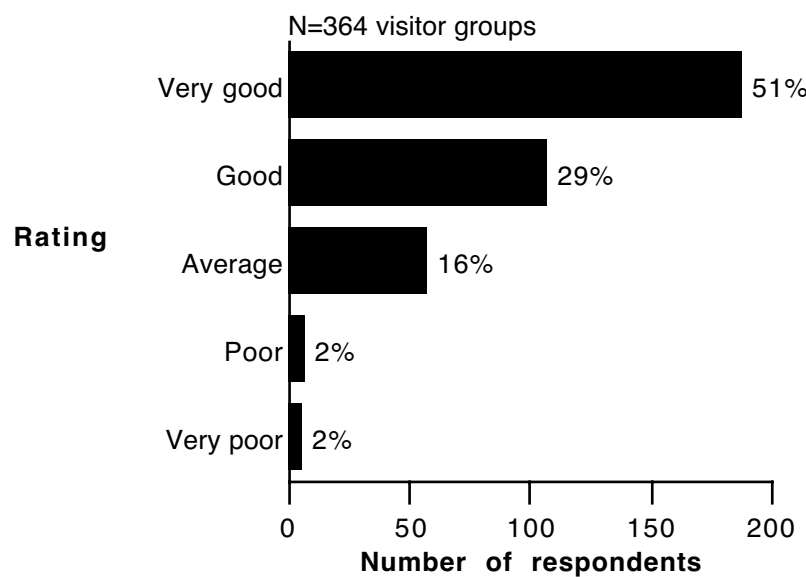


Figure 83: Quality of paved roads

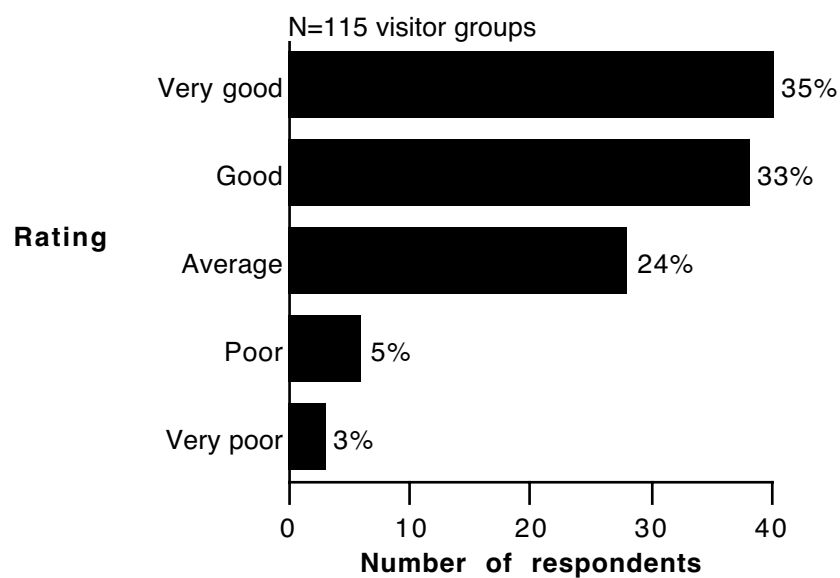


Figure 84: Quality of unpaved roads

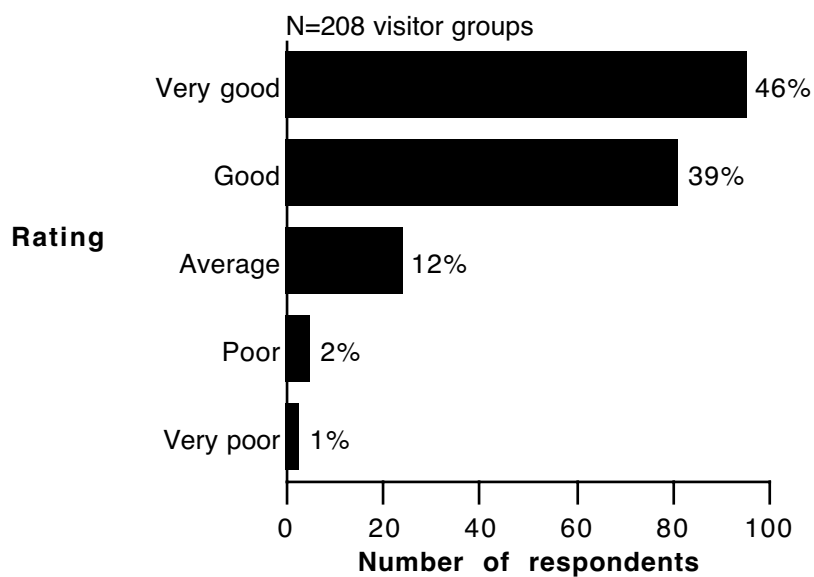
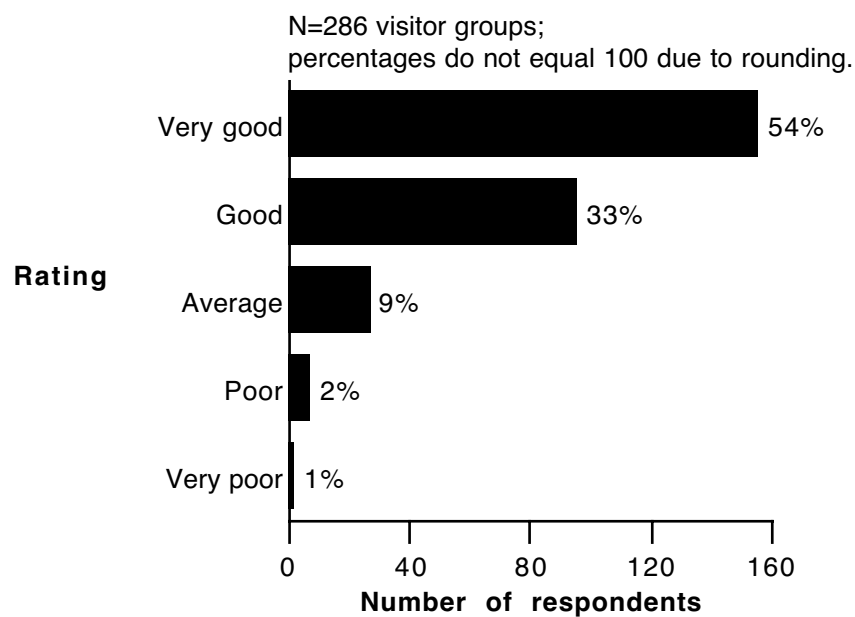
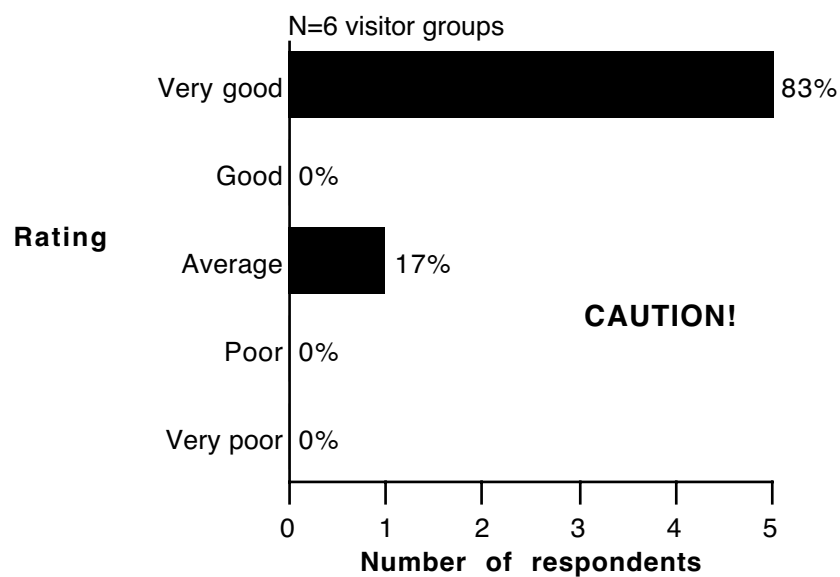


Figure 85: Quality overlooks/pullouts

**Figure 86: Quality of trails****Figure 87: Quality of access for disabled persons**

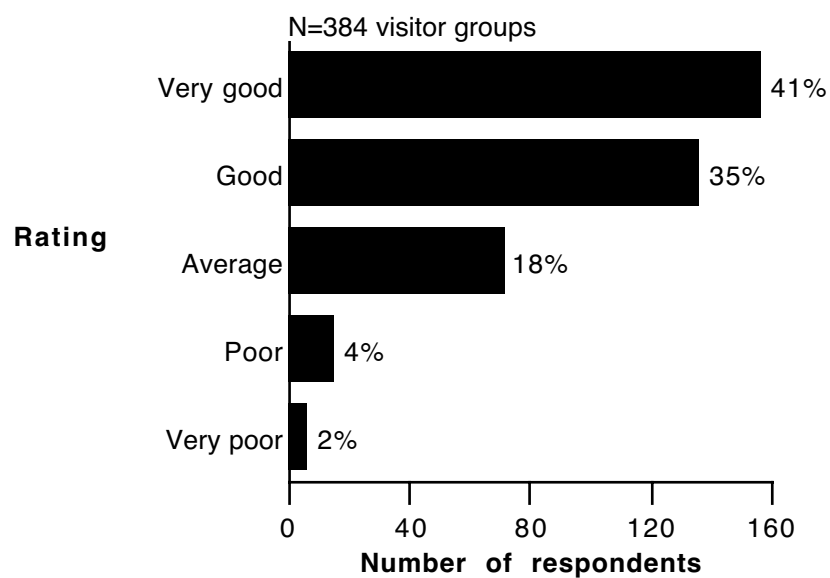


Figure 88: Quality of restrooms

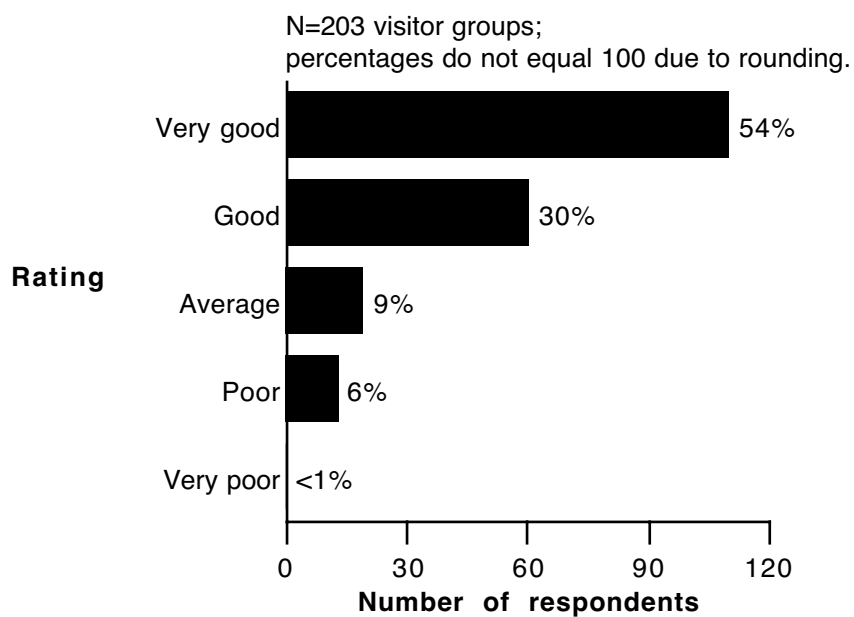


Figure 89: Quality of garbage disposal

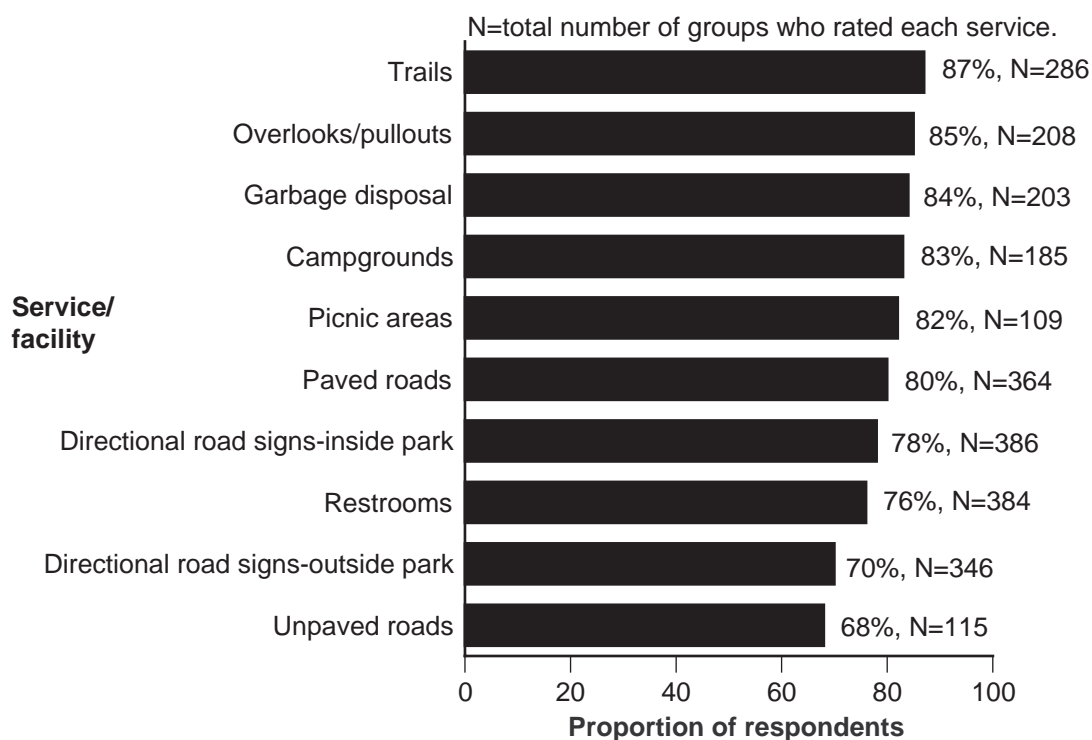


Figure 90: Combined “good” and “very good” quality ratings for visitor services and facilities

Importance of selected park features/qualities

Visitor groups were asked to rate the importance of selected Joshua Tree NP's features/qualities. Table 8 summarizes visitor group ratings for each feature/quality and Figure 91 show the combined "very important" and "extremely important" ratings.

Features/qualities that received the highest "extremely important" and "very important" ratings included clean air (94%) and natural quiet/sounds of nature (93%). The features/qualities that received the highest "not important" rating were access to historical/cultural sites (7%) and access to rock formations (6%).

Table 8: Importance ratings for selected park features/qualities N=number of visitor groups who rated each feature/quality; percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.							
Feature/quality	N	Rating (%)					
		Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Somewhat important	Not important	Don't know
Views without development	512	64	23	6	3	3	2
Natural quiet/sounds of nature	515	70	23	5	1	1	<1
Solitude	510	55	25	15	2	2	1
Clean air	511	73	21	5	1	1	<1
Access to rock formations	511	46	23	19	5	6	2
Access to historical/cultural sites	508	32	28	22	10	7	2

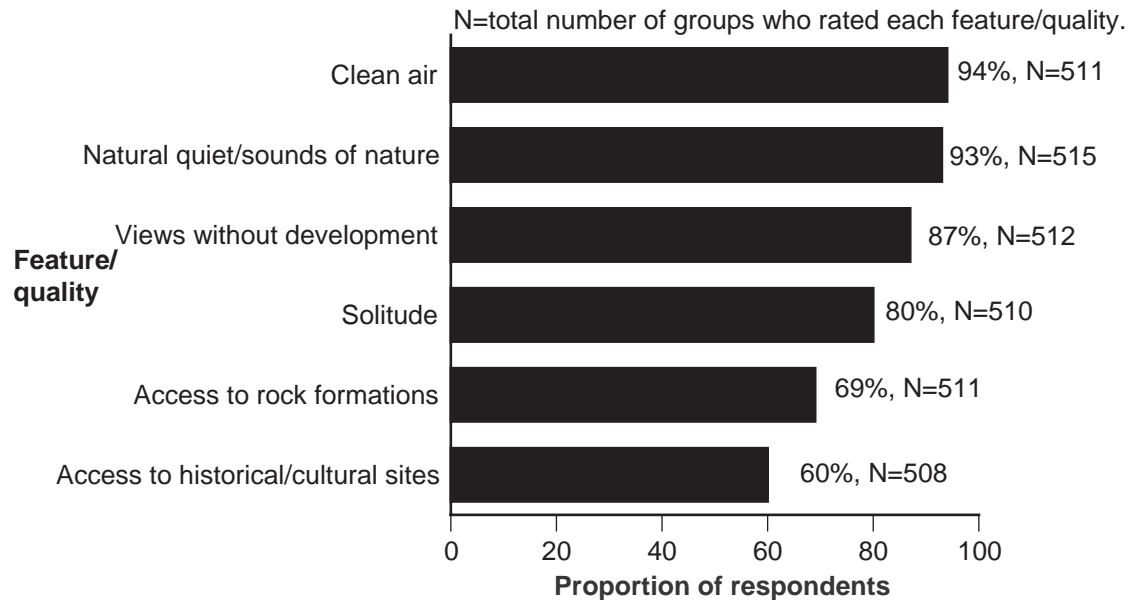


Figure 91: Combined “very important” and “extremely important” ratings for selected park features/qualities

Importance of selected services to visitor enjoyment

Visitor groups were asked to rate the importance of selected services to their enjoyment of Joshua Tree NP on this visit. Table 9 summarizes ratings for each service while Figure 92 shows the combined “extremely important” and “very important” ratings. Services that received the highest “extremely important” and “very important” ratings were availability of water (65%), recycling receptacles (64%), and availability of wildland firefighting (61%). Internet portals at visitor center (64%) and availability of phones (41%), were the services that received the highest “not important” rating.

Table 9: Importance ratings for selected services N=number of visitor groups who rated each feature/quality; percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.							
Service	N	Rating (%)					
		Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Somewhat important	Not important	Don't know
Availability of phones	517	3	12	21	19	41	4
Law enforcement presence	516	8	21	35	23	11	2
Availability of emergency medical services	521	22	37	25	12	3	1
Availability of search and rescue	519	24	32	24	12	6	2
Availability of wildland firefighting	515	28	33	22	10	4	3
Availability of water	519	34	31	18	8	8	1
Recycling receptacles	516	29	35	20	9	6	1
Internet portals at visitor center	516	2	5	8	15	64	7

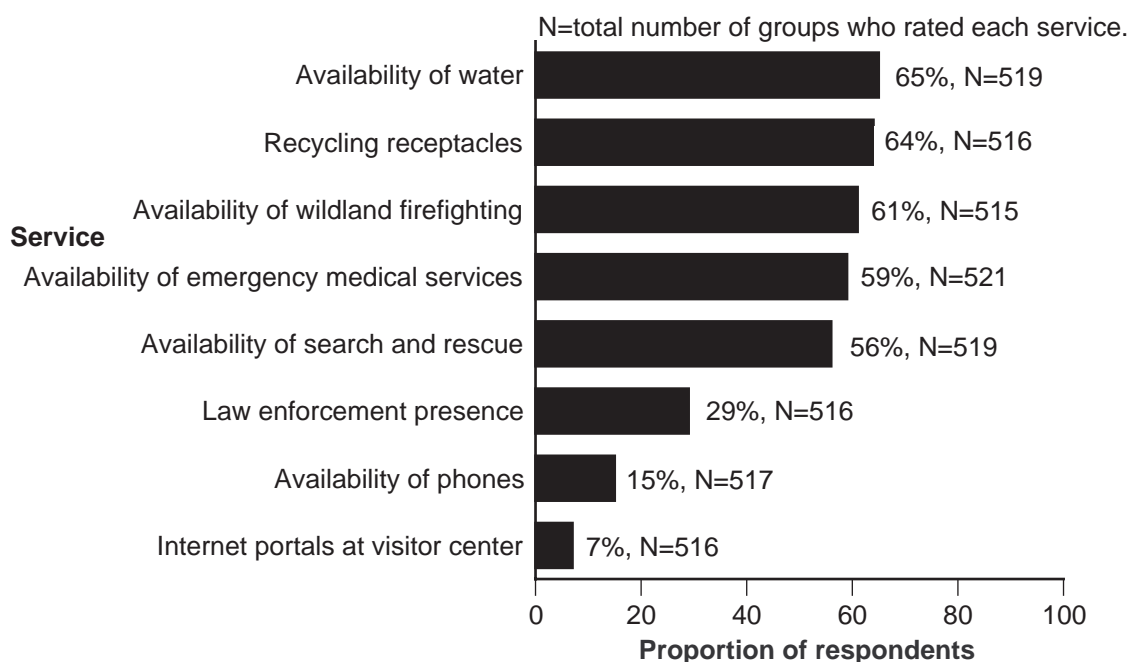


Figure 92: Combined “extremely important” and “very important” ratings for selected services

Total expenditures

Visitor groups were asked to list the amount of money they spent on their visit to Joshua Tree NP and the surrounding area (Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree, and Twentynine Palms). Expenditures were requested for the following: lodging; camping fees; guide fees; restaurants and bars; groceries and take-out food; gas and oil; other transportation expenses; admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees; all other purchases; and donations.

For total expenditures in and around the park, 40% of visitor groups spent between \$1 and \$100 during their visit (see Figure 93). Twenty-one percent of visitors spent \$101-200 and 9% spent between \$201 and \$300. The greatest proportion of expenditures (25%) was for hotels, motels, cabins, etc., as shown in Figure 94.

The average visitor group expenditure during the visit was \$254. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$115. The average per capita expenditure was \$78.

Visitor groups were asked to list how many adults (18 years or older) and children (under 18 years) were covered by their expenditures. Fifty-eight percent of visitor groups had two adults, while 12% had one adult and 12% had three adults (see Figure 95). Figure 96 shows that 42% of groups had one or two children and 20% had three or more children. Thirty-seven percent of groups did not visit with children.

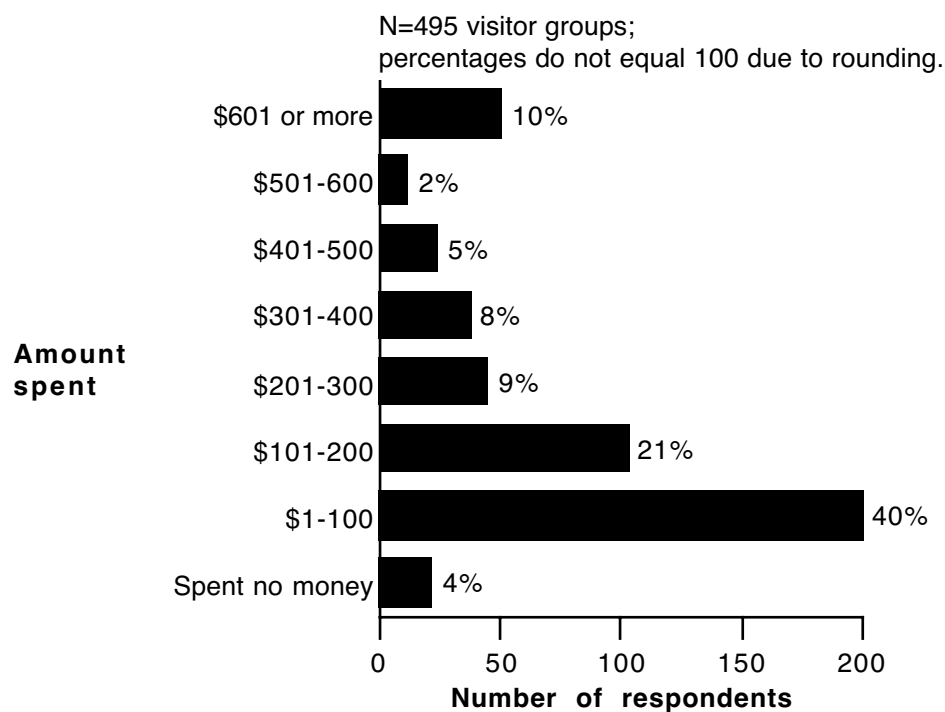


Figure 93: Total expenditures in and out of Joshua Tree NP

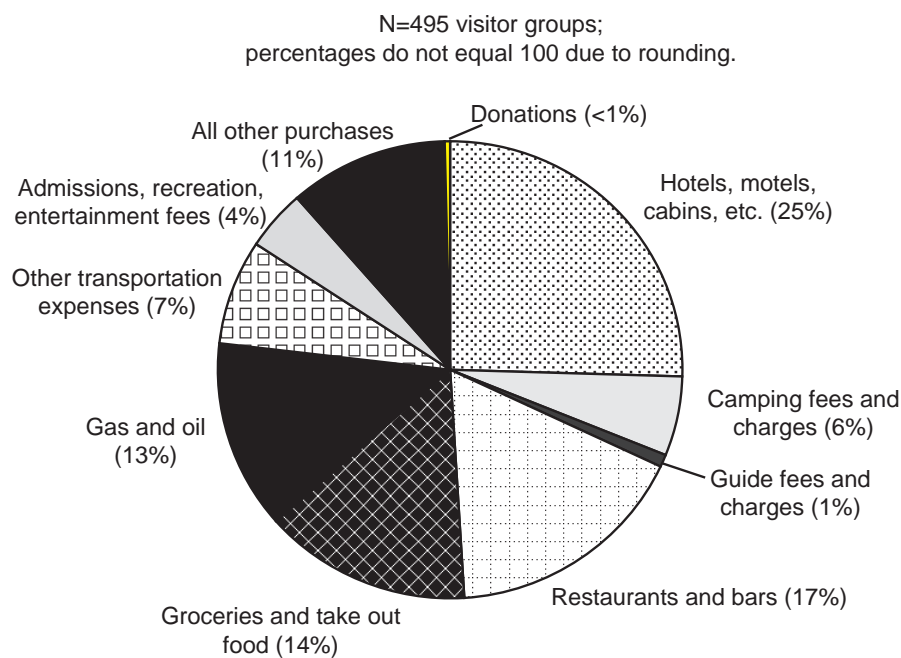


Figure 94: Proportions of expenditures in and out of Joshua Tree NP

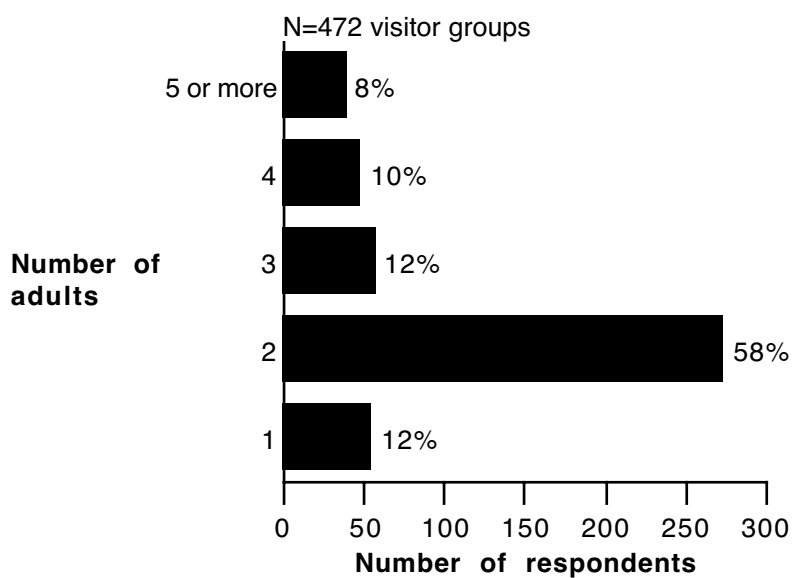


Figure 95: Number of adults covered by expenditures

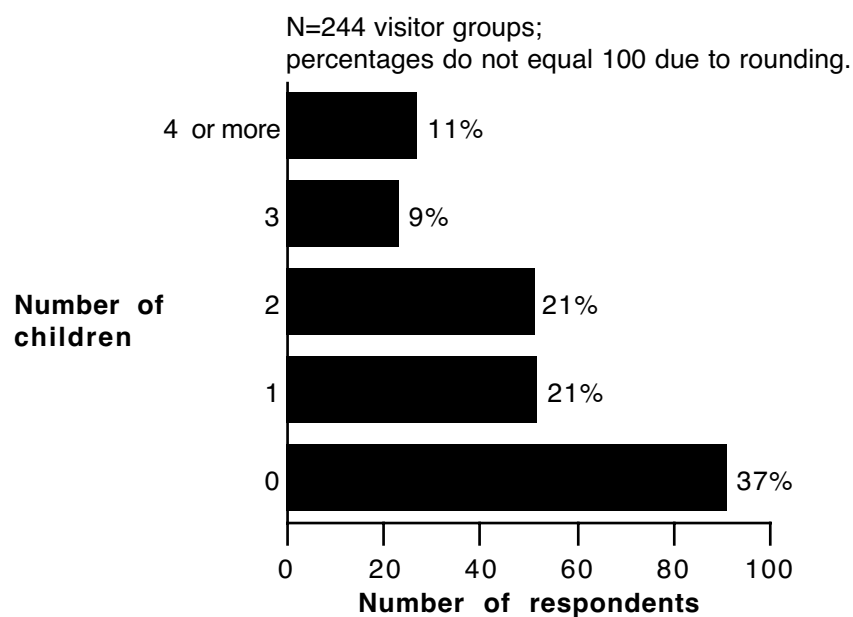


Figure 96: Number of children covered by expenditures

Expenditures inside the park

Total expenditures inside the park: Forty-four percent of visitor groups spent \$1-25 and 16% spent no money (see Figure 97).

“All other purchases” accounted for 37% of expenditures in the park (see Figure 98). Another 35% was comprised of camping fees and charges.

The average visitor group expenditure in the park during this visit was \$40. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$20. The average per capita expenditure was \$18.

Camping fees and charges: Forty-seven percent of visitor groups spent no money in the park and 45% of visitors spent up to \$50 (see Figure 99).

Guide fees and charges: Most visitor groups (93%) spent no money and 6% spent up to \$25 (see Figure 100).

Transportation expenses inside the park: Most visitor groups (98%) spent no money (see Figure 101).

Admission, recreation, and entertainment fees inside the park: More than half of visitor groups (54%) spent \$1-25 and 39% spent no money (see Figure 102).

All other purchases: Fifty-four percent of groups spent no money and 25% spent between \$1 and \$25 (see Figure 103).

Donations: Most groups (88%) did not donate any money and 12% donated up to \$25 (see Figure 104).

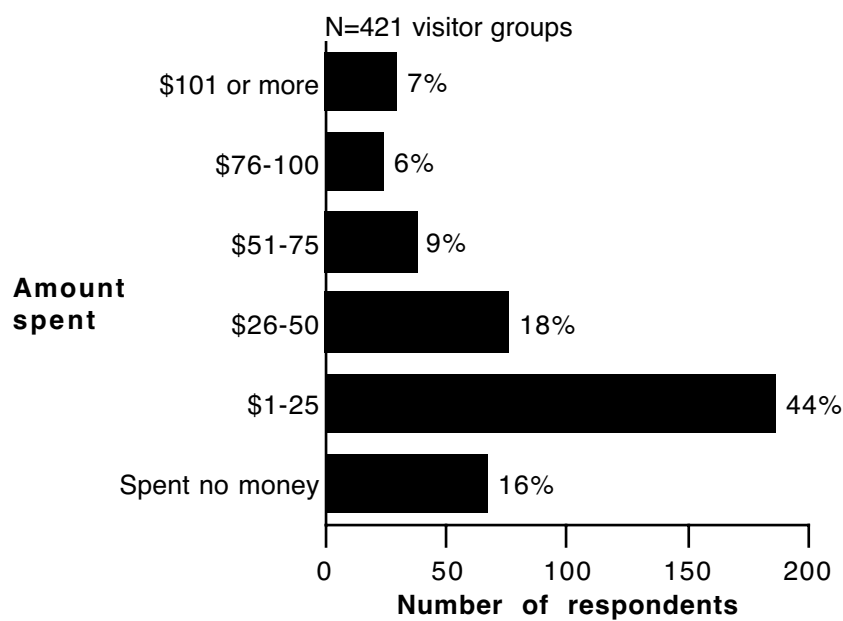


Figure 97: Total expenditures in Joshua Tree NP

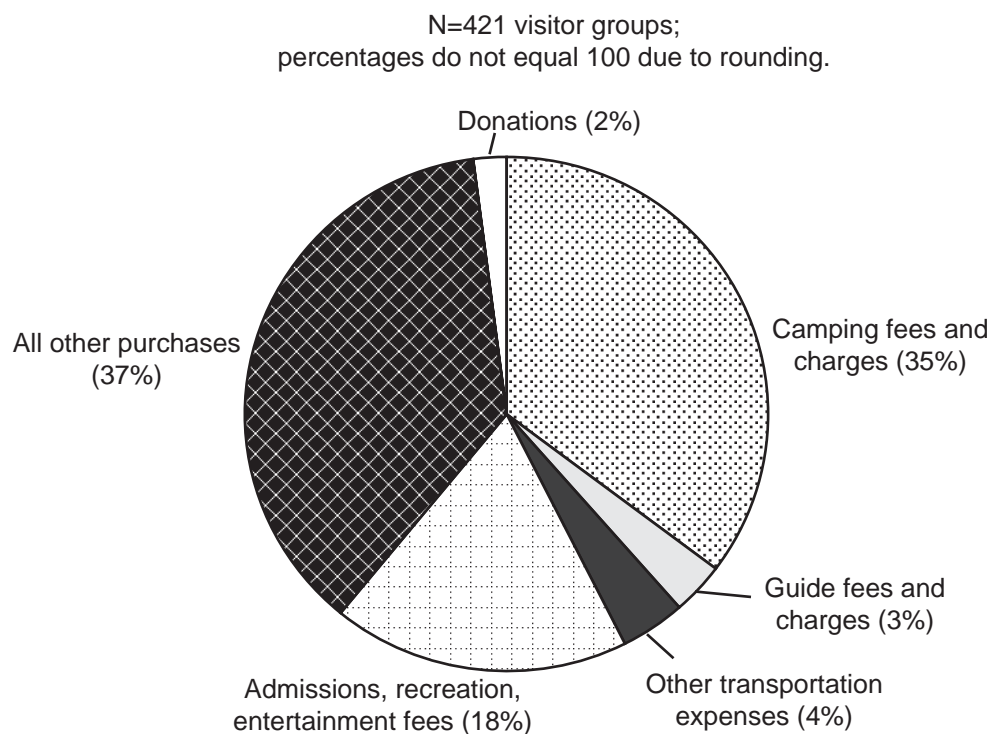


Figure 98: Proportions of expenditures in Joshua Tree NP

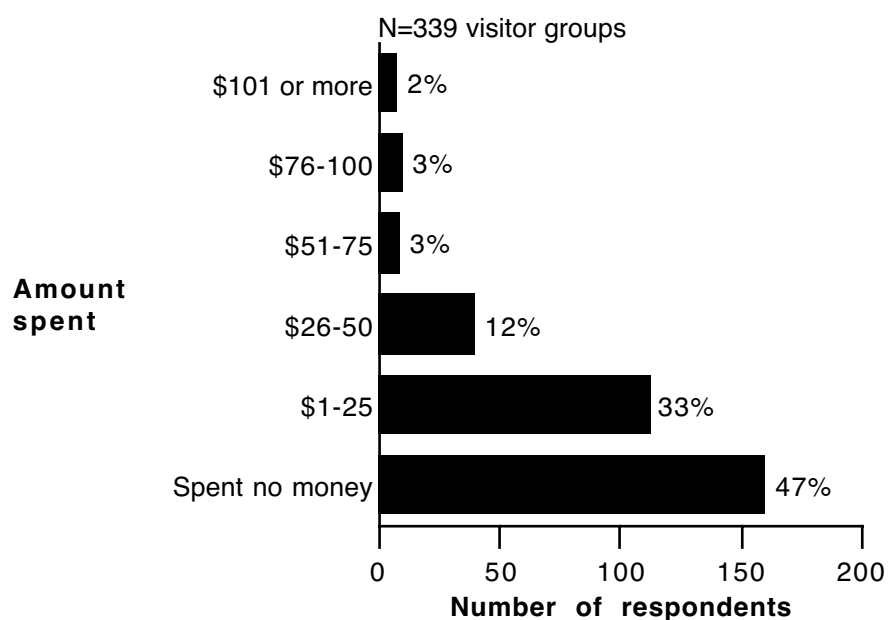


Figure 99: Expenditures for camping fees and charges inside the park

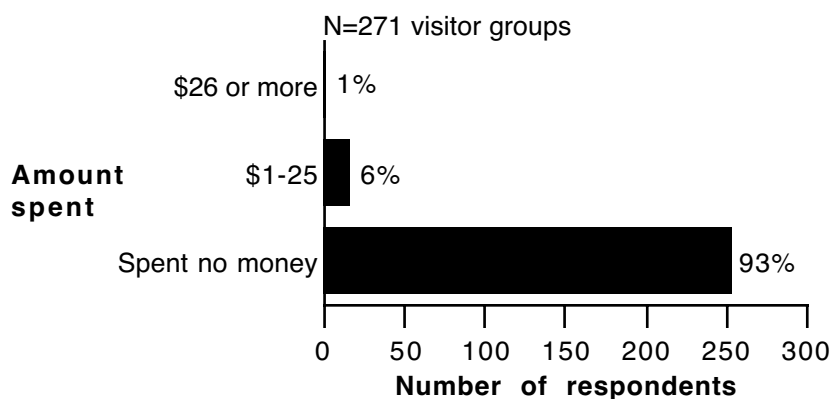


Figure 100: Expenditures for guide fees and charges inside the park

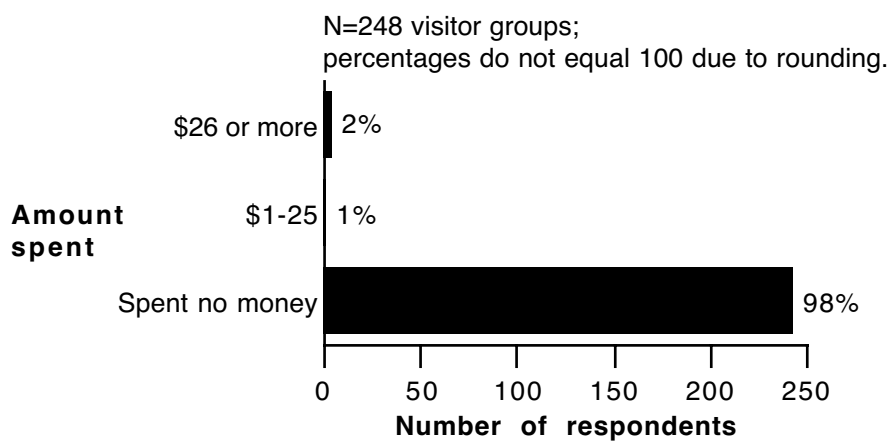


Figure 101: Expenditures for other transportation expenses inside the park

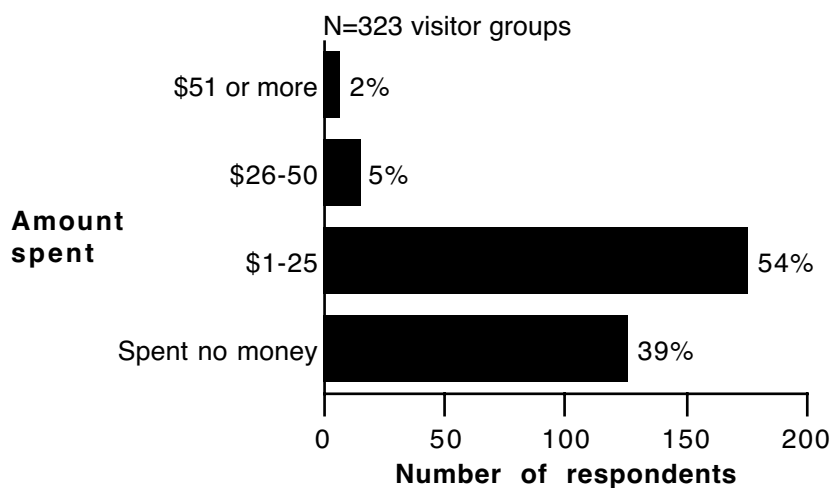


Figure 102: Expenditures for admission, recreation, and entertainment fees inside the park

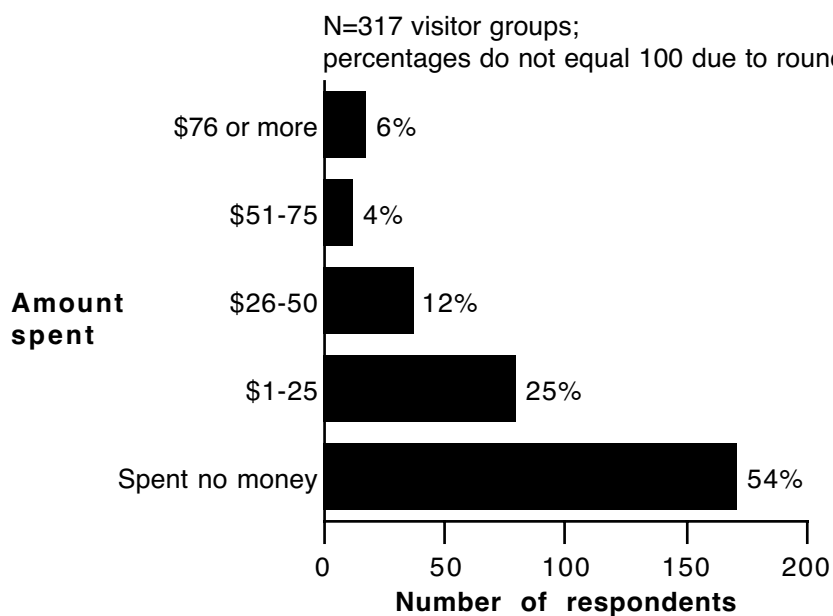


Figure 103: Expenditures for all other purchases inside the park

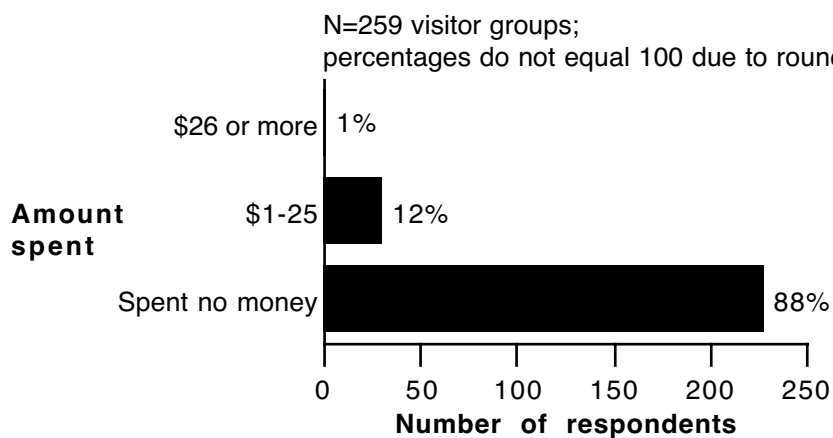


Figure 104: Expenditures for donations inside the park

Expenditures outside the park

Total expenditures outside the park: Forty-two percent of visitor groups spent \$1-100, while 27% spent between \$101 and \$300 in the surrounding area outside Joshua Tree NP including Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree, and Twentynine Palms (see Figure 105).

The largest proportions of expenditures outside of the park were for hotels, motels, etc. (29%), restaurants and bars (20%), and groceries and take-out food (17%), as shown in Figure 106.

The average visitor group expenditure outside of the park during this visit was \$230. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$100. The average per capita expenditure was \$89.

Hotels, motels, cabins, B&B, etc. outside the park: Sixty-six percent of visitor groups spent no money and 13% spent up to \$100 (see Figure 107).

Camping fees and charges outside the park: Most groups (92%) spent no money and 6% spent up to \$50 (see Figure 108).

Guide fees and charges outside the park: Most groups (98%) spent no money and 2% spent up to \$50 (see Figure 109).

Restaurants and bars outside the park: Forty-one percent of groups spent no money and 33% spent up to \$50 (see Figure 110).

Groceries and take-out food outside the park: Over one-half of visitor groups (52%) spent up to \$50 and 27% spent no money (see Figure 111).

Gas and oil outside the park: Sixty-four percent of groups spent up to \$50 and 19% spent no money (see Figure 112).

Other transportation expenses outside the park: Most visitor groups (85%) spent no money and 8% spent \$151 or more (see Figure 113).

Admission, recreation, and entertainment fees outside the park: Most groups (81%) spent no money and 16% spent up to \$50 (see Figure 114).

All other purchases outside the park: Sixty percent of visitor groups spent no money and 27% spent up to \$50 (see Figure 115).

Donations outside the park: Most groups (95%) did not donate any money and 5% donated up to \$50 (see Figure 116).

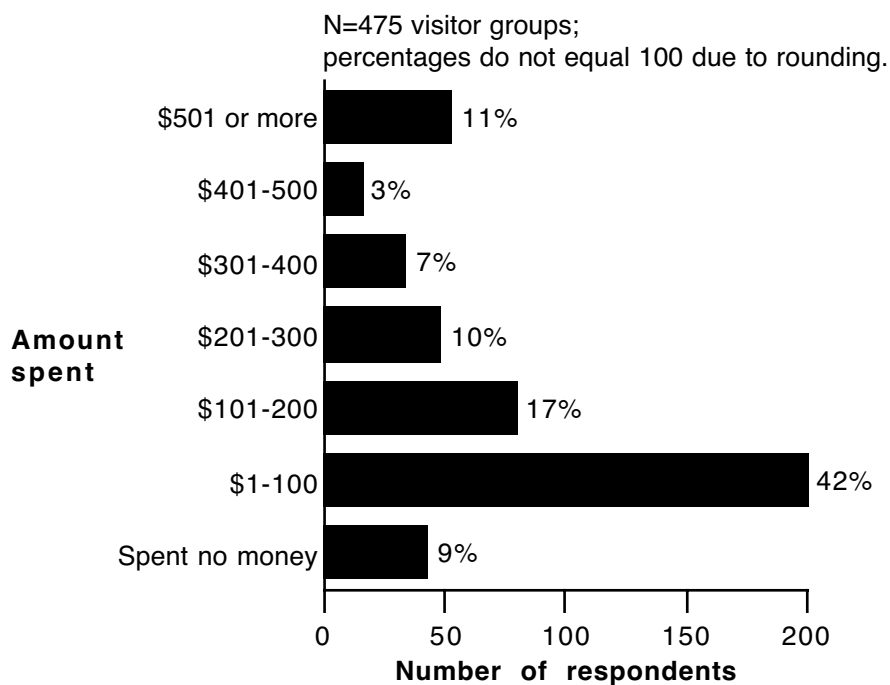


Figure 105: Total expenditures outside Joshua Tree NP

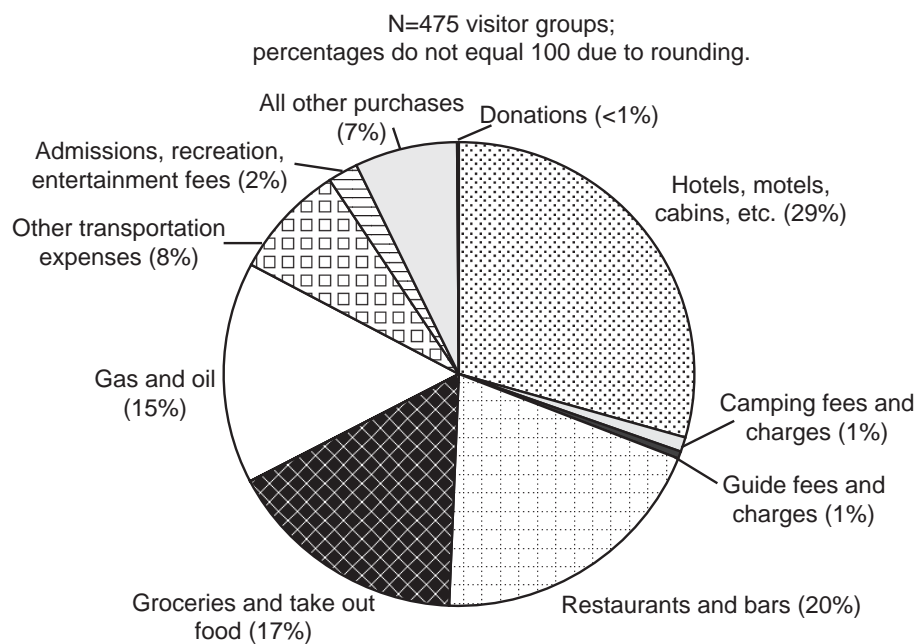


Figure 106: Proportions of expenditures outside Joshua Tree NP

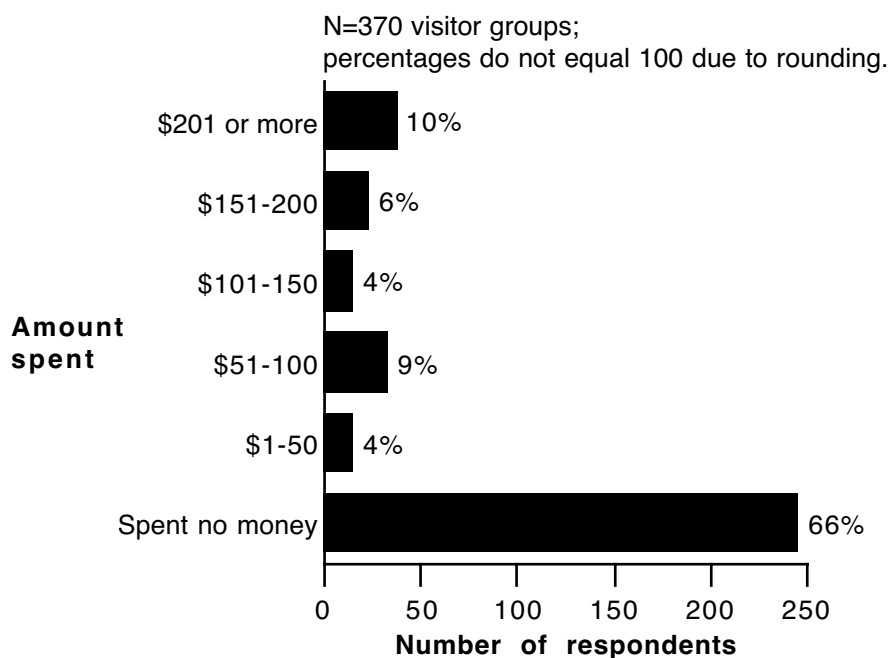


Figure 107: Expenditures for hotels, motels, cabins, B&B, etc. outside the park

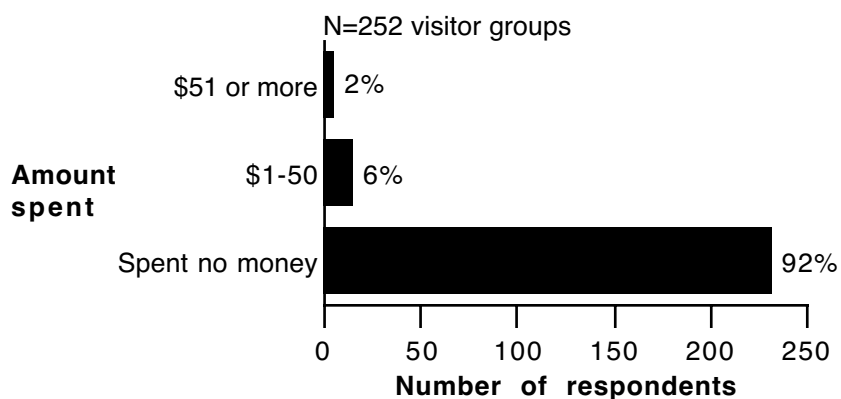


Figure 108: Expenditures for camping fees and charges outside the park

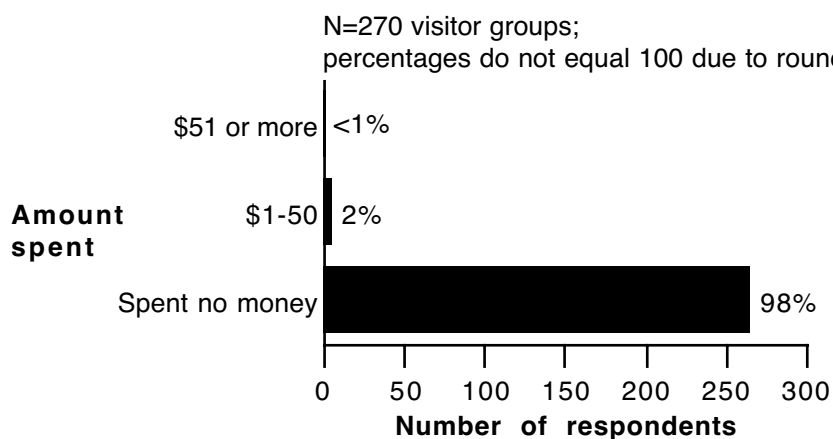


Figure 109: Expenditures for guide fees and charges outside the park

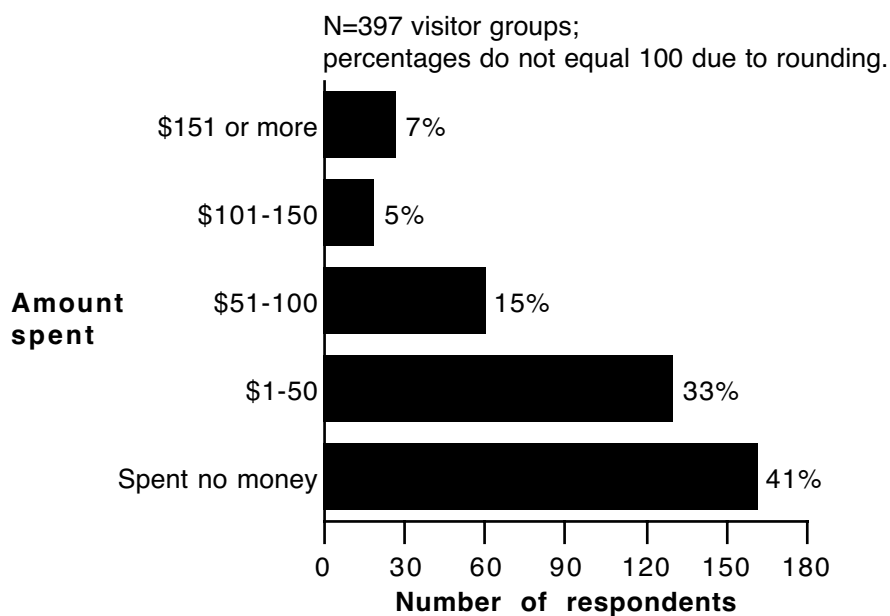


Figure 110: Expenditures for restaurants and bars outside the park

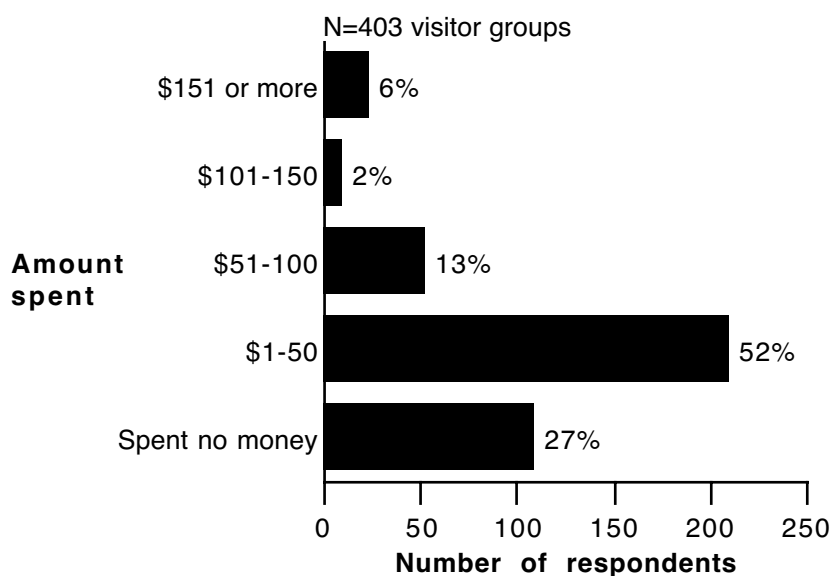


Figure 111: Expenditures for groceries and take-out food outside the park

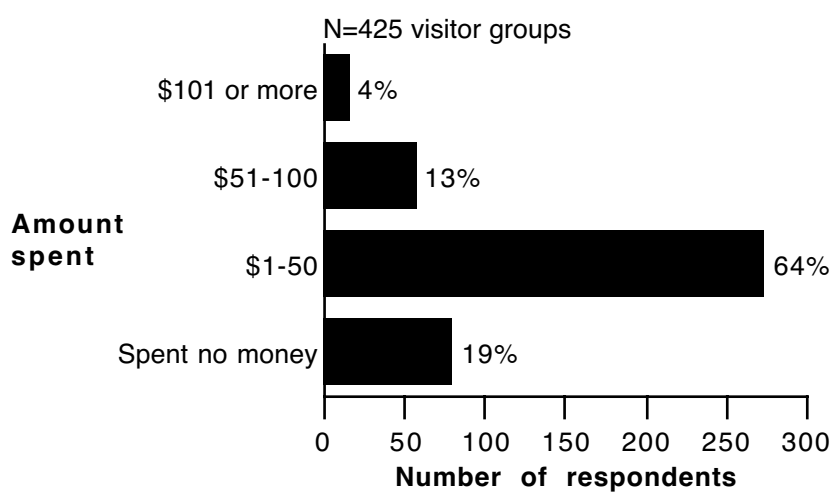


Figure 112: Expenditures for gas and oil outside the park

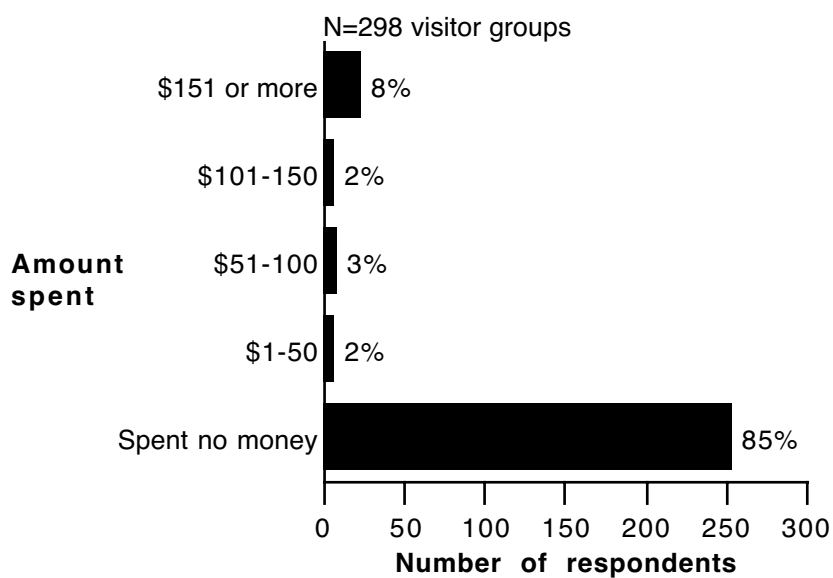


Figure 113: Expenditures for other transportation expenses outside the park

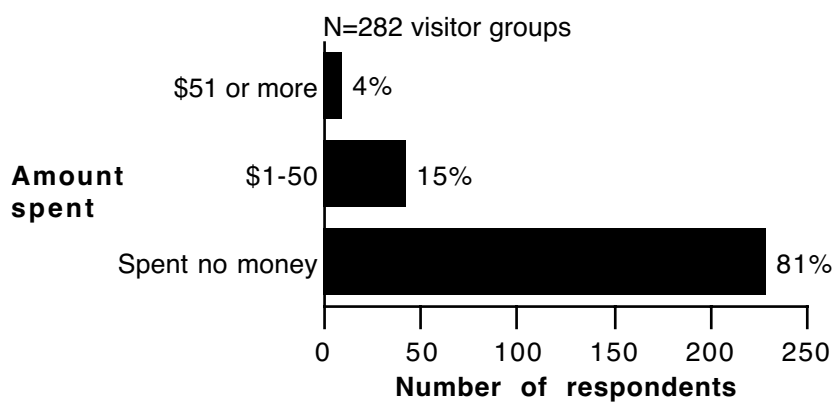


Figure 114: Expenditures for admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees outside the park

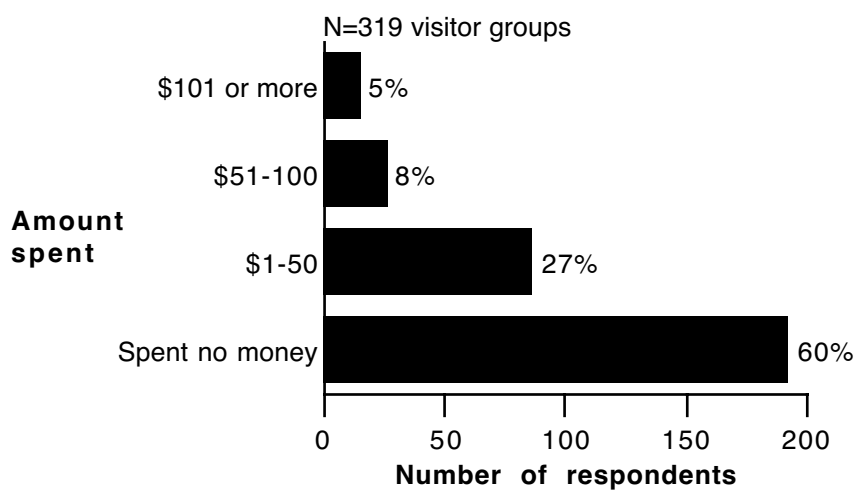


Figure 115: Expenditures for all other purchases outside the park

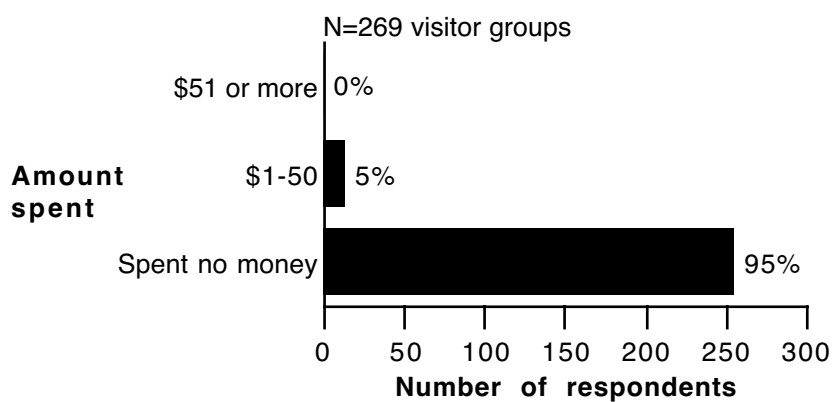


Figure 116: Expenditures for donations outside the park

Visitor opinions about fees

Currently, Joshua Tree NP collects entrance fees from visitors with most of these fees remaining at the park. Visitor groups were asked if they were aware of this policy prior to this visit to the park. Fifty-seven percent of visitor groups were not aware of this policy, 28% were aware but uncertain about the details, 10% were aware of the policy in detail, and 5% were “not sure,” as shown in Figure 117

Visitor groups were then asked how they would like to see the funds from entrance fees used at Joshua Tree NP. Most visitor groups wanted to use the funds for natural/cultural resource management (64%), backlogged maintenance/infrastructure (56%) and visitor services staff (51%). “Other” projects that visitor groups wanted to use the funds for are listed in Table 10.

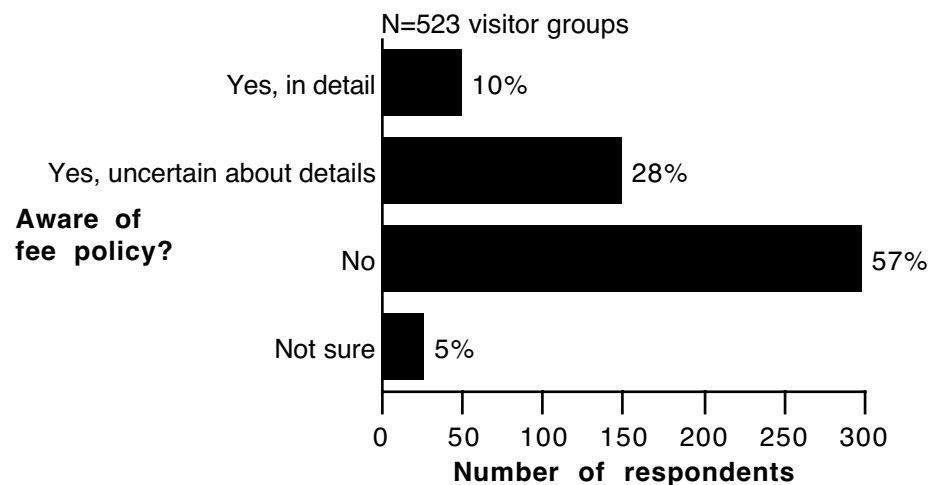


Figure 117: Visitor groups who were aware of the fee policy

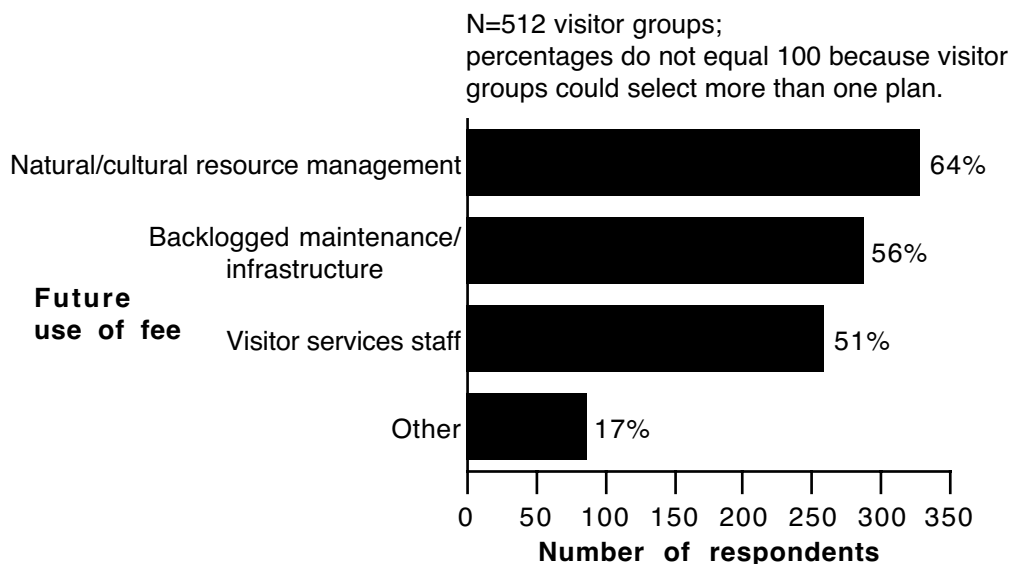


Figure 118: Visitor groups' preference for future use of funds

Table 10: "Other" preferences for using fee funding

N=76 comments

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Preservation of park resources for future generations	10
Whatever the National Park Service believes is important	8
More campgrounds	7
Keep development out of the park	6
Biking trails	5
Better signage in park	5
More access for horseback riding	4
Larger campsites	3
Road maintenance	3
Improve visitor center	3
Provide environmental education for visitors	3
Remove trash	3
More self-guided materials for hiking trails	2
More hiking trails	2
Keep it as is	2
Add showers in campgrounds	2
More secured devices for climbing	2
More programs for children	1
Increase ranger's salary	1
More parking	1
Remove paved roads	1
Provide geology tours	1
Air quality improvement	1

Visitor opinions about safety in the park

During this visit to Joshua Tree NP, most visitor groups (63%) felt that their personal property was “very safe” from crime in the park (see Figure 119). Thirty-two percent of visitor groups felt their personal property was “somewhat safe” and less than 3% felt it was “somewhat unsafe” or “very unsafe.” Visitor groups were then asked how safe they felt from crime against their persons during this visit. As shown in Figure 120, most visitor groups (75%) felt “very safe” and 20% felt “somewhat safe.” Less than 2% of visitor groups felt “somewhat unsafe” or “very unsafe.” in regard to personal safety from accidents in the park, 51% of visitor groups reported feeling “very safe” (see Figure 121). Another 37% felt “somewhat safe” and less than 5% felt “somewhat unsafe” or “very unsafe” from accidents against their persons during this visit to Joshua Tree NP.

Visitor groups who reported feeling “somewhat unsafe” or “very unsafe” were asked to explain why. The reasons that visitors felt unsafe in Joshua Tree NP included cars driving at high speeds, lack of marked bicycle lane, narrow and poor visibility on Lost Horse Mine dirt road, pull-off stops too small, drunk camping neighbors, being nervous of the rock boulders, and generally cautious feeling when sharing the campsites with strangers.

Visitor groups were also asked, “In preparing for this trip, what safety measures did you and your group take?” Most visitor groups (59%, N=308 groups) responded to this question. The safety measures reported by visitor groups are listed in Table 11.

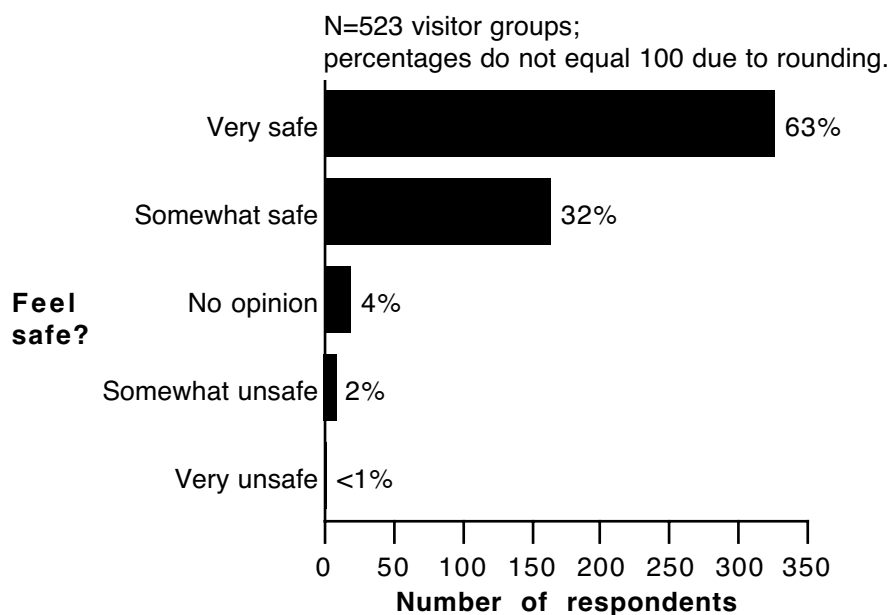


Figure 119: Visitor opinions about safety of personal property from crime in park

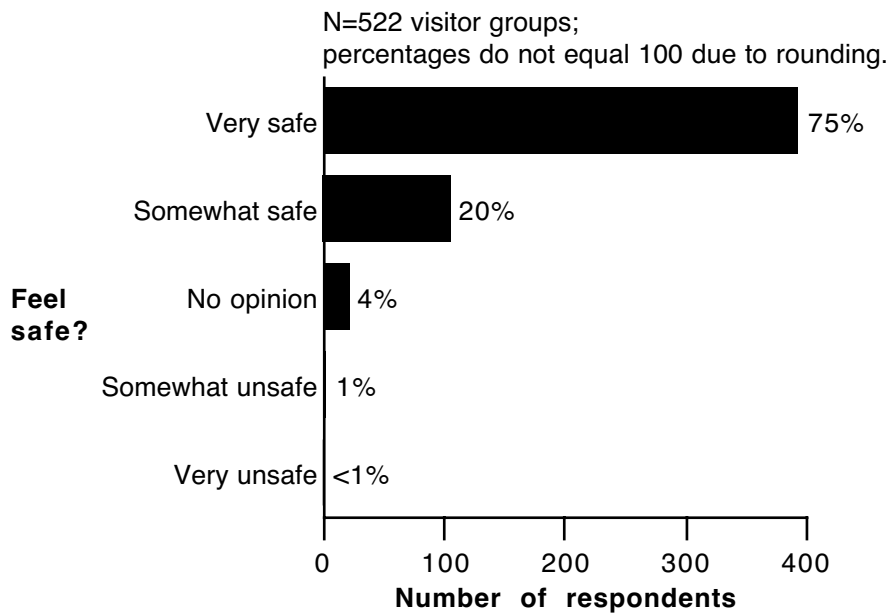


Figure 120: Visitor opinions about personal safety from crime in park

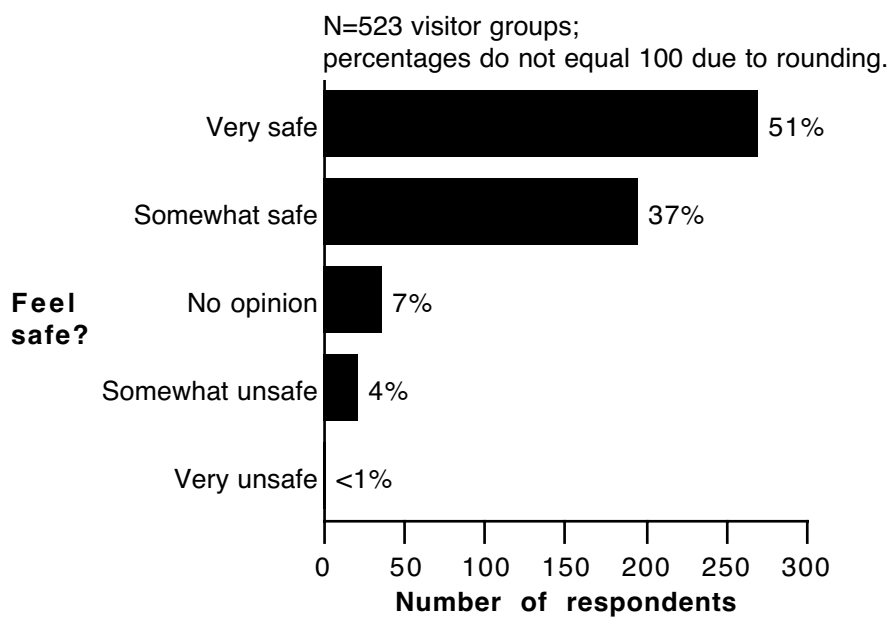


Figure 121: Visitor opinions about personal safety from accidents in park

Table 11: Safety measures

N=584 comments;
some visitor groups made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Carry enough water	126
Bring first aid kit	67
Lock the vehicle	42
Bring enough food	42
Bring sunscreen	41
Wear layers of clothes	31
Wear proper footwear	23
Bring a cell phone	21
Nothing special, just common sense	16
Wear a hat	13
Store all valuables out of sight	13
Bring proper maps	11
Notify people where we are going	10
Bring enough gas	10
Learn about the area before the trip	10
Bring appropriate climbing gear	9
Check the vehicle and tools	9
Carry cash and valuables on the person	8
Stay together in groups	8
Go over safety rules with children	8
Being thorough with climbing techniques	7
Bring snake bite kit	6
Bring compass	5
Bring flashlights	5
Know our limits of physical exertion	5
Bring survival kit	4
Stay on the trail/path	4
Bring proper camping equipment	4
Leave all valuables at home; carry only minimum	4
Bring proper climbing equipment	2
Check weather reports	2
Drive carefully	2
Bring fire extinguisher	2
Other measures	14

Visitor opinions about safety in the town/city closest to home

Visitor groups were asked a series of questions concerning safety issues in the town/city closest to their homes. First, visitor groups were asked how they felt about safety of personal property from crime. Slightly over one-half (51%) of respondents reported they felt “somewhat safe,” 29% felt “very safe,” and 14% felt “somewhat unsafe,” as shown in Figure 122.

When asked about personal safety from crime in the town/city nearest to home, 52% visitor groups reported feeling “somewhat safe,” 33% felt “very safe,” and 11% felt “somewhat unsafe” (see Figure 123). No visitor groups reported that they felt “very unsafe.” Fifty-one percent of visitor groups felt “somewhat safe” from accidents against their persons in the town/city closest to home, while 25% of visitor groups felt “very safe” and 12% felt “somewhat unsafe,” as shown in Figure 124.

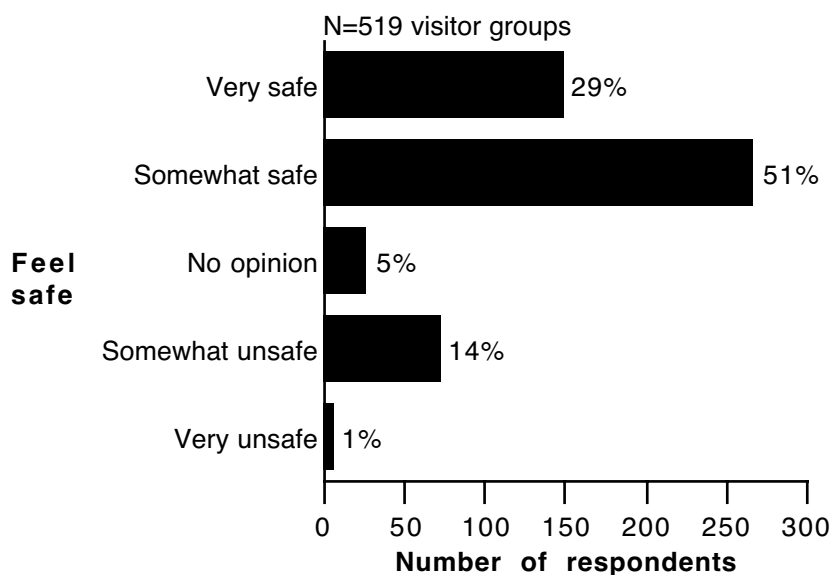


Figure 122: Visitor opinions about personal property safety from crime in the town/city closest to home

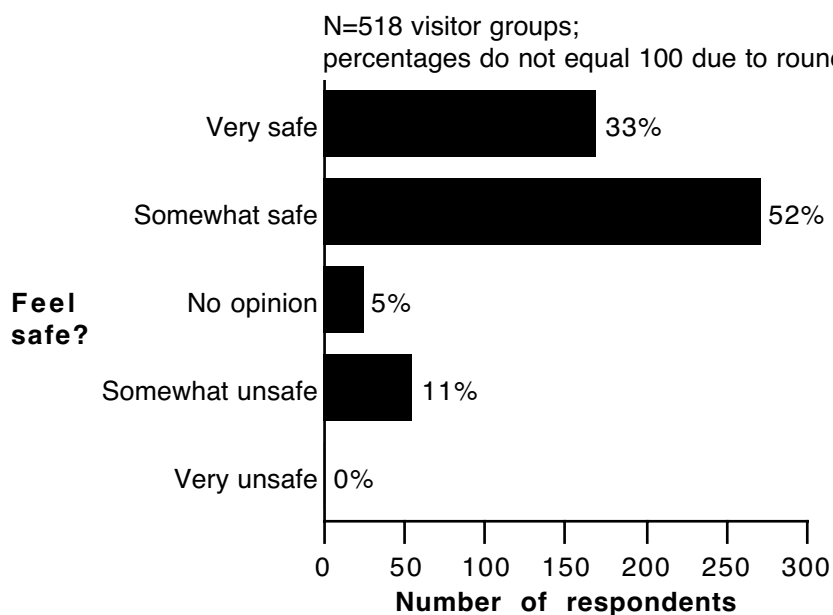


Figure 123: Visitor opinions about personal safety from crime in the town/city closest to home

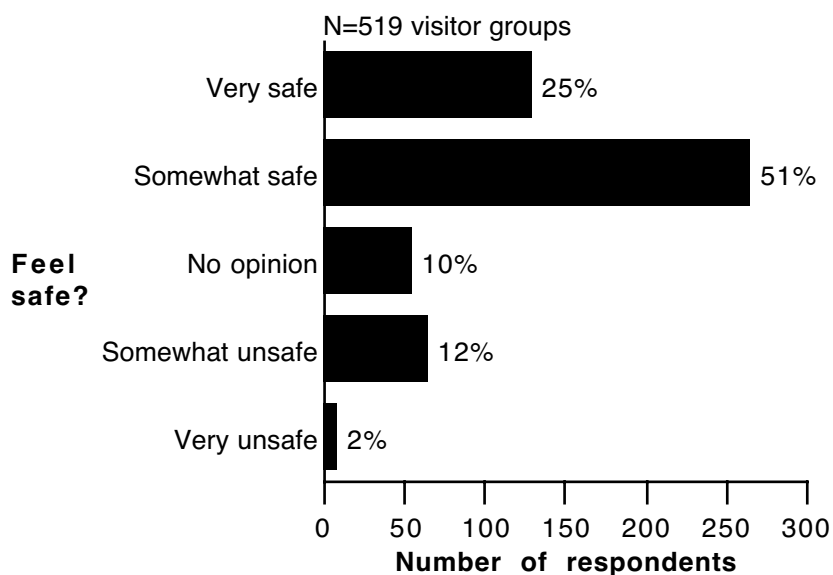


Figure 124: Visitor opinions about personal safety from accidents in the town/city nearest to home

Visitor opinions about wildlife in the park

Wildlife is one of the natural resources that Joshua Tree NP manages. Visitor groups were asked for their opinions with respect to several aspects of wildlife management in the park. First, visitor groups were asked if they observed wildlife approaching visitors and begging for food during this visit to Joshua Tree NP. As shown in Figure 125, most visitor groups (78%) did not observe wildlife approaching visitors and begging for food. However, 21% observed this incident and 2% was “not sure.”

Visitor groups were then asked, “Do you think it is appropriate to feed wild animals in a national park?” Most visitor groups (98%) answered “no,” 2% were “not sure,” and less than 1% said “yes,” as shown in Figure 126.

Finally, visitor groups were asked whether they received any information (written or verbal) regarding the policies of feeding wildlife in national parks during this visit. Fifty-seven percent of visitor groups received information regarding the policies of feeding wildlife, 30% did not receive, and 13% were “not sure” (see Figure 127).

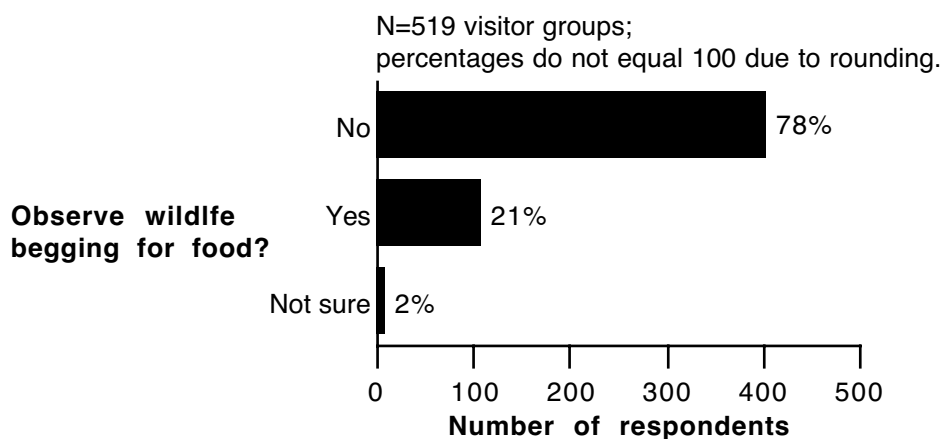


Figure 125: Visitor groups who observed wildlife approaching visitors and begging for food

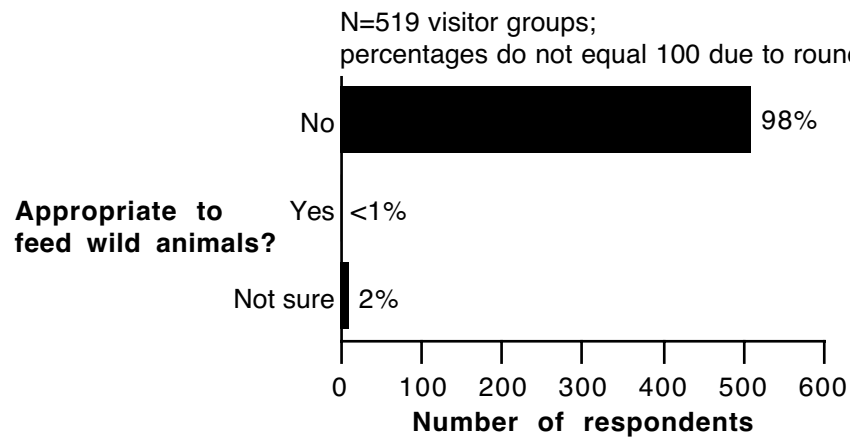


Figure 126: Do you think it is appropriate to feed wild animals in a national park?

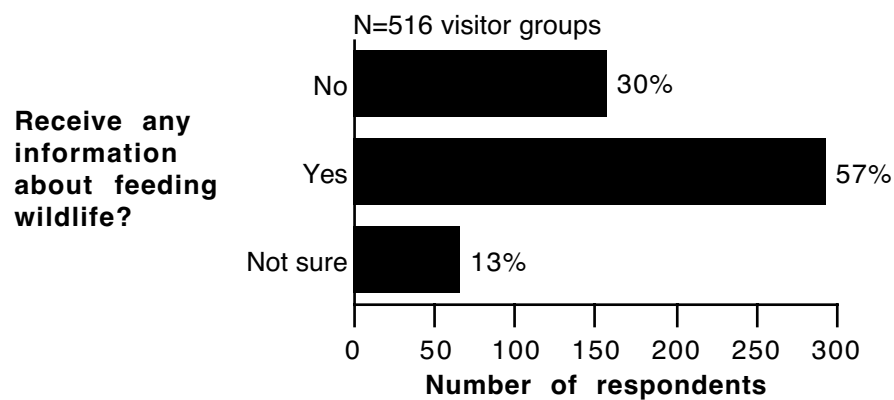


Figure 127: Visitor groups who received information (written or verbal) regarding the policies of feeding wildlife in national parks

Visitor support of a trash-free environment in the park

Joshua Tree NP is considering the concept of a trash-free environment to reduce waste collection time and costs. Visitor groups were asked whether or not they support this concept. As shown in Figure 128, most visitor groups (72%) supported the concept of a trash-free park. However, 15% did not support it and 13% were “not sure.”

Within the concept of a trash-free park, visitor groups were also asked if they would be willing to haul out their own trash on a future visit to Joshua Tree NP. Most visitor groups (79%) reported that they would be willing to haul out their own trash (see Figure 129). However, 13% were not willing and 8% were “not sure.”

Table 12 shows visitor groups’ additional comments on the concept of a trash-free environment. Among those, many visitor groups (N=81 groups) were concerned that Joshua Tree NP would have more litter problems because most visitors are not responsible enough to haul out their own trash.

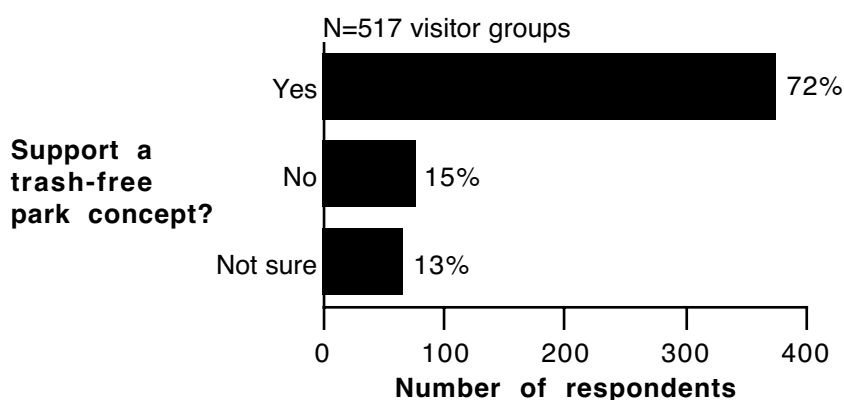


Figure 128: Visitor groups who supported the concept of a trash-free park

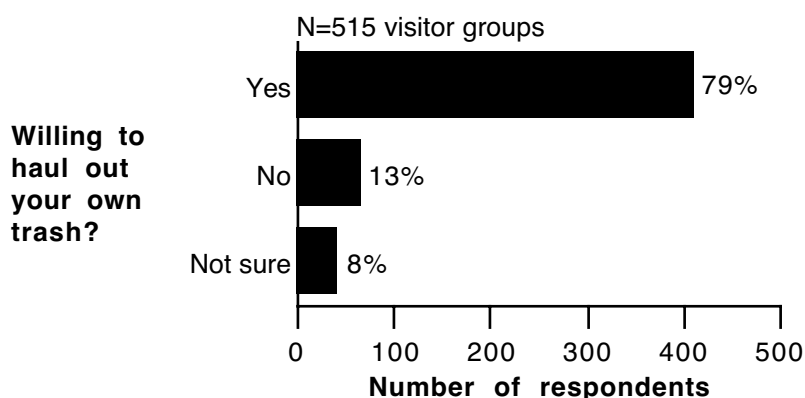


Figure 129: Visitor groups who were willing to haul out their own trash on a future visit to the park

Table 12: Visitor opinions about a trash-free park environment

N=257 visitor groups

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Haul-out-your-own-trash policy will increase litter—people often are not responsible enough	81
Have trash collection/drop-off at some park locations	28
Not practical for campers to haul out trash	28
Good idea—everyone should clean up after themselves	15
Already intended to haul out our own trash	14
Will haul out our own trash but other people will not	14
Trash bins/dumpsters should be available everywhere	11
Will work only with strict enforcement	10
Helps protect environment and wildlife	9
Will comply but prefer receptacle available	9
Distribute trash bags at entrance	8
Keep recycling bins	8
Will require intensive public education	5
Local communities will have to deal with trash problem	2
Other comments	15

Future preference for camping

Visitor groups were asked, “On a future visit, would you and your group be willing to stay in a campground with showers that is not located in the park, but within 10 miles of park boundaries?” Forty-one percent of visitor groups were not willing to camp in a campground with showers outside the park, 33% were willing, and 26% were “not sure,” as shown in Figure 130.

Figure 130: Preference for camping on a future visit

Overall quality

Visitor groups were asked to rate the overall quality of the visitor services provided at Joshua Tree NP during this visit. Most visitor groups (93%) rated the overall quality as “very good” or “good,” as shown in Figure 131. However, 1% of visitor groups rated the overall quality as “poor” and less than 1% rated the overall quality as “very poor.”

Figure 131: Overall quality of visitor services

What visitors liked most

Ninety-five percent of visitor groups (N=497) provided comments about what they liked most about this visit to Joshua Tree NP. Table 13 lists their comments and complete copies of visitor responses are in the appendix.

Table 13: What visitors liked most

N=943 comments;
some visitor groups made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
Helpful and friendly rangers	9
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
Ranger talks	7
Visitor center exhibits	4
Other comments	4
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE	
Undeveloped campgrounds preserving pristineness of park	25
Ease of access to park locations	9
Park very well maintained	7
Clean bathrooms	5
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
Unspoiled natural beauty	116
Wildflowers in spring	85
Rock formations	74
Beautiful botany/plant life/vegetation	37
Wildlife	34
The Joshua trees	23
The desert environment	22
Clean air	17
Cactus gardens	13
Diversity of terrain	12
Not crowded	10
Feeling of open space	10
Absence of man-made development	10

Table 13: What visitors liked most (continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
GENERAL COMMENTS	
Peaceful/quiet/solitude	104
Unique landscape/scenery/view	97
Hiking in nature	66
Rock climbing/bouldering experience	46
Stargazing	18
Perfect weather	17
Like everything	9
Being outdoors with family/friends	8
Scenic drive through the park	8
Geology	7
Birdwatching experience	7
The rain	4
Nice people in the park	4
Other comments	17

What visitors liked least

Seventy-six percent of visitor groups (N=398 visitor groups) responded to the question, "What did you like least about your visit to Joshua Tree NP?" Their comments are listed in Table 14 and complete copies of visitor responses are in the appendix.

Table 14: What visitors liked least

N=426 comments;
some visitor groups made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
Unhelpful park staff	6
Other comments	2
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
Poor park map	8
Other comments	3
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE	
No campsite available	22
Dirty and smelly bathrooms	19
Unclear road signs/signage	15
Delay due to road construction	11
Campsites too small	11
Not enough trail markings	11
Lack of showers	10
Too much trash	10
New paved roads and curb disrupt ecosystem	9
Too crowded at campsites	8
No water	8
Rough roads	8
Signs of vandalism in park	5
Not enough pullouts/overlooks	5
Not enough shade	4
No safe lanes for bicycle	2
Other comments	14
POLICIES/MANAGEMENT	
Noisy camping neighbors	31
Other cars going too fast	15
The fees	6
Should not allow RV's in park	3
Not being able to go on the trail with pets	2
Add concessions to park	2
Other comments	5

Table 14: What visitors liked least (continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
Too crowded	24
Outside development approaching park	9
Poor air quality	8
Smog blocking the view	7
Not enough wildlife to observe	5
Seeing visitors feeding coyotes	2
Other comment	1
GENERAL COMMENTS	
Nothing to dislike	41
Trip was too short	18
Cold and windy weather	13
The rain	12
Long drive to the park	10
Too hot	4
Other comments	17

Visitor opinions about national significance of the park

Eighty-four percent of visitor groups (N=441 groups) provided comments about the national significance of Joshua Tree NP. Their comments are listed in Table 15 and complete copies of visitor responses are in the appendix.

**Table 15: Visitor opinions about national significance
of Joshua Tree NP**

N=577 comments;
some visitor groups made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Preserving the diversity of high desert wildlife habitats	54
Protect the pristineness of the area from industrialized development	43
Place to preserve and protect Joshua trees	41
Special rock formations	40
Preservation of an unique natural environment and ecosystem	39
Special high desert environment that needs to be protected	38
Natural beauty	33
Unique landscape	29
Preservation of natural beauty for public enjoyment	25
Special geological formations	25
Preservation for future generations	20
Geologically historical treasure	17
Beautiful and rare environment, no place like this	17
A tranquil and peaceful place to be away from urban lifestyle	17
Good place to educate public about value of natural resources and how much we have destroyed them	13
A wonderful specimen of two merging desert environments	11
Preserve remnants of Native American culture	11
Very high	10
Place that shows the greatness of our nation	10
An unique site for rock climbing	8
Protection of natural resources	8
A national heritage	8
As significant as other national parks	8
An unique wilderness area at close proximity to large urban area	7
The historical appearance of the west	6
Don't know/unsure	5
Spiritual values	5
Great site for geological study	2
Other comments	27

Planning for the future

Visitor groups were asked, "If you were a manager planning for the future of Joshua Tree NP, what would you propose?" Seventy percent of visitor groups (N=366 groups) responded to this question. A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 16 and complete copies of visitor responses are in the appendix.

Table 16: Planning for the future

N=541 comments;
some visitor groups made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
More ranger presence	7
Raise rangers' salaries	3
Other comments	2
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
Continue environmental education for public	24
More ranger-led walk/talk programs	21
Need better trail markings/signage	12
More interpretive signs in park	11
More publicity for the park	8
Better directional road signs/signage	8
Need better park map	7
More exhibits at visitor centers	5
Organize climbing classes	2
Put more warning signs to slow down traffic	3
Other comments	4
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE	
No more development to keep park as natural as possible	54
More hiking trails	24
More campsites	21
Add pay showers	17
More water stations/fountains	13
Upgrade unpaved roads	9
Keep rustic quality of campgrounds	7
Improve bathroom facilities	6
Add safety lane for bicycles	5
Add a lodge/hotel in park	3
Take off all the curbs	3
Separate RV and tent camping	3
Have some horseback riding trails	3
Add some concession services in park	3
Other comments	16

Table 16: Planning for the future (continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
POLICIES/MANAGEMENT	
Limit motor vehicle traffic in park	20
Limit number of visitors	12
Enforce park rules	12
Keep it accessible to public	10
Increase fees	10
Do not allow RV's in park	7
Do not allow off-road vehicles/SUV	7
Aggressive fund-raising activities for the park	6
Allow more reservation for campsite	5
Allow replacement of old bolts	5
Encourage pack-in/pack-out trash policy	5
Do not follow haul-out-your-own-trash policy	4
Allow pets on trails	3
Have separate lanes for already-paid visitors to reduce waiting time	2
Other comments	12
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
Acquire more land to expand park's boundary	20
Focus on preserving natural resources	13
Limit climbing to protect resources	7
Prevent surrounding development from approaching park	5
Do something to reduce air pollution	4
Remove nonnative species	2
Other comments	3
GENERAL COMMENTS	
Good work, keep it as is	27
Don't know/ not qualified to answer	18
Conduct more scientific research of the park's ecosystem	9
Do not privatize services in park	3
Other comments	6

Additional comments

Forty-nine percent of visitor groups (N=259 groups) wrote additional comments, which are included in the separate appendix of this report. Their comments about Joshua Tree NP are summarized below (see Table 17). Complete copies of visitor comments are in the appendix.

Table 17: Additional comments

N=595 comments;
some visitor groups made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
Friendly/courteous staff/rangers	22
Helpful staff/rangers	17
Informative staff/rangers	5
Personnel poorly informed	4
Personnel unfriendly	2
Other comments	1
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
Inadequate park guide/map	8
Park guide/map were helpful	5
Add ranger programs	5
Excellent park guide/map	4
Enjoyed nature trails	3
Enjoyed ranger programs	3
Enjoyed visitor center	3
Improve reservation system	3
Enjoyed nature trails	2
Educational visit	2
Enjoyed driving tours	2
Provide additional information	2
Improve website	2
Other comments	7

Table 17: Additional comments (continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE	
Beautiful campgrounds	7
Inadequate trail signs	6
Great/nice restrooms	4
Increase campsites	3
Unclean restrooms	3
Well maintained facilities	3
Well maintained park	3
Campgrounds well signed	2
Dislike road curbs	2
Improve restroom maintenance	2
Improve road directional signs	2
Increase recycling containers	2
Add shower facilities	2
Remove litter	2
Well maintained roads	2
Well maintained trails	2
Other comments	9
POLICIES/MANAGEMENT	
Keep up the good work	13
Restrict improvement/modernization	7
People too noisy	5
Need more ranger presence/patrols	4
Need to enforce quiet hours	3
Allow climbing	2
Change reservation policy	2
Don't over commercialize park	2
Limit activities	2
Pet regulations too restrictive	2
Other comments	22
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
Preserve/protect park	15
Enjoyed geology	9
Enjoyed plants/flowers/trees	8
Park is valuable resource/treasure	8
Enjoyed nature	5
Too many people	4
Other comments	6

Table 17: Additional comments (continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
GENERAL COMMENTS	
Enjoyed visit	86
Will return	36
Loved the park	28
Park is beautiful	25
Thank you	21
Repeat visit	20
Very nice/amazing park	15
Enjoyed climbing/scrambling	7
Peaceful/serene/tranquil	6
Enjoyed camping	5
Visit too short	5
Appreciate ease of access	4
Enjoyed exploring	4
Enjoyed hiking	4
Enjoyed the drive	3
Not sure what to expect	3
Close proximity to home	2
Exceeded expectations	2
First time visit	2
Increase federal funding	2
Inspiring experience	2
Stayed longer than planned	2
Unplanned visit	2
Very impressed with park	2
Went hiking	2
Will recommend to visitors	2
Other comments	23

Additional Analysis Joshua Tree National Park VSP Report 152

The Visitor Services Project (VSP) offers the opportunity to learn more from VSP visitor study data. Additional analysis can be done using the park's VSP visitor study data that was collected and entered into the computer. Two-way and three-way cross tabulations can be made of any of the characteristics listed below. Be as specific as possible-you may select a single program/service/facility instead of all that were listed in the questionnaire. Include your name, address and phone number in the request.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| • Sources of information prior to visit | • Information services used | • Preferences for using fee monies in park |
| • Visitor travel plans | • Importance of information services used | • Opinions about safety from crime/accidents in park |
| • Length of stay (hours) | • Quality of information services used | • Opinions about safety from crime/accidents in home town/city |
| • Length of stay (days) | • Visitor services/facilities used | Importance of selected park services |
| • Number of park entries | • Importance of visitor services/facilities used | • Total expenditures in and outside the park |
| • Awareness of Congressionally designated wilderness areas | • Quality of visitor services/facilities | • Expenditures within the park |
| • Visit wilderness areas? | • Primary reason for visiting Joshua Tree NP area | • Expenditures outside the park |
| • Awareness of issues facing park | • Group type | • Number of adults covered by expenses |
| • Learn about issues on this visit? | • Group size | • Number of children covered by expenses |
| • Attempt campsite reservations prior to visit? | • Number of vehicles per group | • Observe wildlife begging for food? |
| • Able to make campsite reservations? | • Gender | • Appropriate to feed wildlife in national park? |
| • Sites visited/order visited | • Age | • Receive information about policy on feeding wildlife? |
| • Entrance used to first enter park | • Zip code/state of residence | • Willingness to haul own trash on future visit? |
| • Activities participated in on this visit | • Country of residence (other than U.S.) | • Support concept of trash-free park environment? |
| • Stay overnight away from home? | • Number of visits during lifetime | • Willingness to stay in campground with showers outside park (within 10 miles)? |
| • Number of nights inside/outside park | • Importance of selected park features/qualities | • Overall quality of visitor services |
| • Type of lodging inside/outside of park | • Awareness of entrance fee policy? | |

See next page for contact information

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QUESTIONNAIRE

VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT PUBLICATIONS

Reports 1-6 (pilot studies) are available from the University of Idaho Park Studies Unit. All other VSP reports listed are available from Park Studies Unit website: <<http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>>. All studies were conducted in summer unless otherwise noted.

1982

1. Mapping interpretive services: A pilot study at Grand Teton National Park.

1983

2. Mapping interpretive services: Identifying barriers to adoption and diffusion of the method
3. Mapping interpretive services: A follow-up study at Yellowstone National Park and Mt Rushmore National Memorial
4. Mapping visitor populations: A pilot study at Yellowstone National Park

1985

5. North Cascades National Park Service Complex
6. Crater Lake National Park

1986

7. Gettysburg National Military Park
8. Independence National Historical Park
9. Valley Forge National Historical Park

1987

10. Colonial National Historical Park (summer & fall)
11. Grand Teton National Park
12. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
13. Mesa Verde National Park
14. Shenandoah National Park (summer & fall)
15. Yellowstone National Park
16. Independence National Historical Park: Four Seasons Study

1988

17. Glen Canyon National Recreational Area
18. Denali National Park and Preserve
19. Bryce Canyon National Park
20. Craters of the Moon National Monument

1989

21. Everglades National Park (winter)
22. Statue of Liberty National Monument
23. The White House Tours, President's Park (summer)
24. Lincoln Home National Historical Site
25. Yellowstone National Park
26. Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area
27. Muir Woods National Monument

1990

28. Canyonlands National Park (spring)
29. White Sands National Monument
30. National Monuments, Washington, D.C.
31. Kenai Fjords National Park
32. Gateway National Recreation Area
33. Petersburg National Battlefield
34. Death Valley National Monument
35. Glacier National Park
36. Scott's Bluff National Monument
37. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

1991

38. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park (spring)
39. Joshua Tree National Monument (spring)
40. The White House Tours, President's Park (spring)
41. Natchez Trace Parkway (spring)
42. Stehekin-North Cascades NP/ Lake Chelan NRA
43. City of Rocks National Reserve
44. The White House Tours, President's Park (fall)

1992

45. Big Bend National Park (spring)
46. Frederick Douglass National Historic Site (spring)
47. Glen Echo Park (spring)
48. Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site
49. Jefferson National Expansion Memorial
50. Zion National Park
51. New River Gorge National River
52. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, AK
53. Arlington House-The Robert E. Lee Memorial

1993

54. Belle Haven Park/Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve (spring)
55. Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (spring)
56. Whitman Mission National Historic Site
57. Sitka National Historical Park
58. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (summer)
59. Redwood National Park
60. Channel Islands National Park
61. Pecos National Historical Park
62. Canyon de Chelly National Monument
63. Bryce Canyon National Park (fall)

VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT PUBLICATIONS (continued)**1994**

- 64. Death Valley National Monument Backcountry (winter)
- 65. San Antonio Missions National Historical Park (spring)
- 66. Anchorage Alaska Public Lands Information Center
- 67. Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts
- 68. Nez Perce National Historical Park
- 69. Edison National Historic Site
- 70. San Juan Island National Historical Park
- 71. Canaveral National Seashore
- 72. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (fall)
- 73. Gettysburg National Military Park (fall)

1995

- 74. Grand Teton National Park (winter)
- 75. Yellowstone National Park (winter)
- 76. Bandelier National Monument
- 77. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve
- 78. Adams National Historic Site
- 79. Devils Tower National Monument
- 80. Manassas National Battlefield Park
- 81. Booker T. Washington National Monument
- 82. San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park
- 83. Dry Tortugas National Park

1996

- 84. Everglades National Park (spring)
- 85. Chiricahua National Monument (spring)
- 86. Fort Bowie National Historic Site (spring)
- 87. Great Falls Park, Virginia (spring)
- 88. Great Smoky Mountains National Park (summer)
- 89. Chamizal National Memorial
- 90. Death Valley National Park (fall)
- 91. Prince William Forest Park (fall)
- 92. Great Smoky Mountains National Park (summer & fall)

1997

- 93. Virgin Islands National Park (winter)
- 94. Mojave National Preserve (spring)
- 95. Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site (spring)
- 96. Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial
- 97. Grand Teton National Park
- 98. Bryce Canyon National Park
- 99. Voyageurs National Park
- 100. Lowell National Historical Park

1998

- 101. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Preserve (spring)
- 102. Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (spring)
- 103. Cumberland Island National Seashore (spring)
- 104. Iwo Jima/Netherlands Carillon Memorials
- 105. National Monuments & Memorials, Washington, D.C.
- 106. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, AK
- 107. Whiskeytown National Recreation Area
- 108. Acadia National Park

1999

- 109. Big Cypress National Preserve (winter)
- 110. San Juan National Historic Site, Puerto Rico (winter)
- 111. St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
- 112. Rock Creek Park
- 113. New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
- 114. Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve
- 115. Kenai Fjords National Park
- 116. Lassen Volcanic National Park
- 117. Cumberland Gap National Historical Park (fall)

2000

- 118. Haleakala National Park (spring)
- 119. White House Tour and White House Visitor Center (spring)
- 120. USS Arizona Memorial
- 121. Olympic National Park
- 122. Eisenhower National Historic Site
- 123. Badlands National Park
- 124. Mount Rainier National Park

2001

- 125. Biscayne National Park (spring)
- 126. Colonial National Historical Park (Jamestown)
- 127. Shenandoah National Park
- 128. Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
- 129. Crater Lake National Park
- 130. Valley Forge National Historical Park

VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT PUBLICATIONS (continued)**2002**

- 131. Everglades National Park
- 132. Dry Tortugas National Park
- 133. Pinnacles National Monument
- 134. Great Sand Dunes National Monument & Preserve
- 135. Pipestone National Monument
- 136. Outer Banks Group (Cape Hatteras NS, Ft. Raleigh NHS and Wright Brothers NMEM)
- 137. Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks and Sequoia National Forest
- 138. Catoclin Mountain Park
- 139. Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site
- 140. Stones River National Battlefield

2003

- 141. Gateway National Recreation Area: Floyd Bennett Field (spring)
- 142. Cowpens National Battlefield (spring)
- 143. Grand Canyon National Park – North Rim
- 144. Grand Canyon National Park – South Rim
- 145. C&O Canal National Historical Park
- 146. Capulin Volcano National Monument
- 147. Oregon Caves National Monument
- 148. Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site
- 149. Fort Stanwix National Monument
- 150. Arches National Park
- 151. Mojave National Preserve (fall)

2004

- 152. Joshua Tree National Park (spring)

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the University of Idaho, Park Studies Unit at website: http://www.psu.uidaho.edu
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